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Par Vobis,
OR,
G O S P E L
AND
LIBERTY:

Against Ancient and Modern

P A P I S T S.

By E. G. Preacher of the VVord.

The Second Edition, Corrected and Amended.

*Stand fast in the Liberty, wherewith Christ
hath made us free, and be not entangled
again with the Toke of Bondage, (Po-
pery.) Gal. c. 5. v. 1.*

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T H E

P R E F A C E,

To the Children of the
Reformation.

BE not concerned to know whose hand it is which holds the Link, but follow the light it gives: Reach your hand to receive this Treatise, which marks the shore, where the Ark of our Reformation, shatter'd by a Deluge of Troubles, may rest; which is a Holy Liberty to all and each person to believe or not believe, act or not act, as he pleases, with a safe Conscience, according to the Principles of our Reformation. We generally lament the convulsions which shake our Church and State, through the diversity of Opinions professed by our several Congregations; some Remedies have been applied to bring us to Peace and Conformity, but all have proved ineffectual; some of our Doctors judge, nothing can cure our Disease but a General Council or supream Authority, to whose Sentence we should all submit; but this, besides that it is Popish, to grant any humane power for to oblige our Consciences against our Judgments in matters of Religion, is but an imaginary Remedy for a real Evil: For, it's not in the Reformation as in Popery; in this there is a supream Authority for to convene the Pastors of divers Kingdoms to a general Council, in our Reformation there is none; Popery believes it's Councils and Popes infallible, and therefore they

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cannot but acquiesce, because an infallible Sentence leaves no doubt of the Truth; but in the Reformation, all Councils and humane Authority are fallible, and consequently their Decisions may be doubted of, and we are never certain of the Truth.

Others judge, the Remedy of our Disease can be no other but Pills of Persecution, penal Laws, Acts of Parliament, Ordinances of Synods, forcing Men to Conformity; but this has proved not only destructive to the peace of the Church, but has shockt the very foundation of our Reformation: For if we must believe under severe penalties what the State and Ecclesiastical Authority will have us believe, then Scripture must be no more our Rule of Faith, but the State and Church, which tells me what I must believe, and we must be deprived of the right and power of Interpreting Scripture, and believing it in the sense we think it to be the true, and yet our whole Reformation is cemented and was first raised upon this Holy Liberty; that every one should read Scripture, interpret it, and believe whatever he thought was the true sense of it, without any compulsion or constraint for to believe either Church, State, University, or Doctors, if we did not judge by Scripture his Doctrine was true.

If prudence had as great a share in our conduct, as passion, we should regulate our future, by the effects of our past actions; and if we will cast an eye back to the transactions of later Years, we shall find this compulsion of Mens Consciences has produced but confusion in our Church, and fatal disturbances in our State, contrariwise, never did our Reformation enjoy more peace, shin'd with more lustre, and held its course with more happiness, than when none was molested for his Profession, but every one had liberty to believe and teach what Doctrine and sense one thought to be the most conformable to Scripture. Consider the infancy of the Reformation, when God raised Luther to repair the ruines of the Church; how of a sudden it spread it self in Germany, France, Holland, Poland, Scotland, and England, and by what means? Was it not by taking away all constraint of Mens Consciences (used then only in the

Popish

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*Popish Church, } our blessed Reformers taking to themselves
 and giving to others, a Holy Liberty for to teach and believe
 whatever they judged to be the Doctrine and true sense of Scrip-
 ture, tho it should be against the received opinion of the Coun-
 cils, Church, Universities and Doctors? Look into the Reign of
 Edward the VI. then did our Reformation flourish in Eng-
 land; and was miraculously propagated by the Liberty of
 Martin, Bucer, Cranmer, Ochinus, Peter Martyr, and
 others in teaching Calvinism, Lutheranism, Zuinglian-
 ism, by Scripture as every one understood it: Descend to the
 Reign of Queen Mary; then the light of the Gospel was e-
 clipsed, because the flock was again Popishly compelled to be-
 lieve, not what they judged by Scripture to be true, but what
 the Pope and Church judged was such: come down a step low-
 er to Queen Elizabeths time, then the flock recovering that
 Holy Liberty for to believe what each one thought was the Doct-
 rine of Scripture; the Reformation gained ground, our several
 Congregations lived peaceably, for tho Protestantism was esta-
 blisht the Religion of the Land, others were not oppressed, nor
 their Liberty constrained by compulsions: Step down a degree
 lower to King James his time, the Reformation held its course
 as prosperously as in Queen Elizabeths time, because Mens
 Consciences were not oppressed; all Reformed Brethren had full
 Liberty to believe as they pleased, the Protestantism was the
 Religion of the King: Look down a step lower to King Charles
 the first's Reign his Majesty carried with a Godly Zeal of re-
 straining the diversity of Opinions, begot by the Liberty en-
 joyed in his predecessors times, would by new Laws and Ord-
 nances force the flock to an Uniformity of Doctrine, but our ze-
 alous Brethren the Presbyterians, impatient of any constraint
 in affairs of Religion, and pleading for the Evangelical Li-
 berty of our Reformation, for to believe nothing, nor use any
 Rites or Ceremonies, but as each one judged by Scripture to be
 convenient, they covenanted against his Majesty and Bishops;
 and the Storm grew to that height, that both Church and State
 were drown'd almost in the Blood of our Reformed Brethren:
 Lastly, look upon our Realm as it is at present, the symptoms of
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dissatisfactions which you may read and hear in Coffe-Houses, in publick and private Conversations : the sparkles of jealousies, which appear in our Land, the cabals against our Government, the animosity of divided parties, the murmur and complaints of all, what's all this but the smoke of that hidden fire of Zeal, wherewith Protestants would force Presbyterians by penal Laws, to profess their Tenets, Presbyterians exclaim against Protestancy, as against Popery, Quakers judge both to be limbs of Satan, Anabaptists look on all three, as children of Perdition : and no Congregation would give Liberty for to profess any Tenets but its own ; insomuch that if you consider all well, each of our congregations are as severe Tyrants over our judgments and consciences, as Popery was, and our Reformation comes to be in effect but an exchange of one Italian Pope, for many English ones : For as in Popery, we must submit our Judgments to the Pope and Church of Rome, or be esteemed putrid rotten Members, and be shut out of Heavens Gates, and suffer Inquisitions, Persecutions, Excommunications, and what not, so among us, you must believe Scripture, as Interpreted by the Church of England, or you are condemned by them, you must believe Scripture, as Interpreted by the Presbyterians, or you are accursed by them, you must believe as Anabaptists do or you are damn'd by them, and not one Congregation among us, but would Root all the others out of the World, if it could, and we do not fear that danger whereof S. Paul, Gal. 5. 15. warns us, we bite and devour one another, let's take heed, we be not consumed one of another ; giving us likewise a wholesome advice in the same place, how to prevent this Evil, Stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage: The World did groan under this heavy Yoke in Popery : wherein our Rule of Faith, was Scripture as interpreted by the Pope and Church : Scripture was kept from the hand of the flock ? No man permitted to give or believe any Interpretation or sense of it, but what the Pope, Church, and Fathers did approve : our Reason, our Judgments, our Consciences were slaves under this

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this Yoke, until that God raised our glorious and blessed Reformers, Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Beza, and others? who took a Holy Liberty, and gave us all Liberty for to Read and Interpret Scripture, to believe no Doctrine, but what we judged to be true by Scripture. To believe any sense of it, which we judged to be true, tho contrary to all the World. They took for their Rule of Faith Scripture, and nothing else but Scripture as each one of them understood it, this same Rule of Faith they left to us, and a Holy Freedom and Liberty of our Judgments and Consciences, that any man of sound Judgment may hold and believe whatever sense of it he thinks to be true.

This therefore is the scope and end of my following Treatise, that, whereas our Rule of Faith, as I will prove by the unanimous consent of our whole Reformed Church, is Scripture or Gods Written Word, as Interpreted by each person of sound Judgment; that whereas by the principles of our Reformation, no man is to be constrained to believe any Doctrine against his Judgment and Conscience: (otherwise why were not we left in Popery) it is impious, tyrannical, and quite against the Spirit of the Reformation, to force us by Acts of Parliaments, Decrees of Synods, Invektives, and Persecutions of indiscreet Brethren, to embrace this or that Religion; that every one ought to be permitted to believe what he please; if you think Bigamy to be the Doctrine of Scripture, if you think by Scripture there is one Nature and four Persons in God, if you think Transubstantiation to be true, if you judge by Gods Words there's neither Purgatory nor Hell, finally whatever you think to be the true sense of Scripture, you are bound as a true Reformed Child, to believe it; that it is quite against the spirit of Reformation to censure, oppose or blame the Doctrine or Tenets of any Congregation, or of any Doctor of the Reformed Church, because that any Doctrine professed by any Christian Congregation, whatever (the Popish excepted) or that ever was delivered by any man of good Judgment of the Reformation, since the beginning of it, until this day, is as truly and really the Doctrine of the Reformation, as the Figurative Presence or Kings supremacy is. Consequently Protestants
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are deservedly to be checkt for persecuting Quakers; Quakers, for murmuring against Presbyterians; these, for their invectives against Anabaptists and Socinians; All are very good, and you may lawfully according to the principles of our Reformation believe them, or deny them.

This Evangelical Liberty of believing any thing which we judge to be the sense of Scripture, tho' all the rest of the world should judge it to be a Blasphemy, is the most distinctive sign of the Reformation from Popery; for Papists are the Children of Agar the Slave; they live in Bondage and constraint to believe any Doctrine, which the Pope and Church proposes to them; and if a learned Man or University should judge it to be contrary to Scripture, he must submit his judgment to that of the Pope, or be condemn'd as an Heretick: In our Reformation we are the Children of Sarah the Free; our Rule of Faith is Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment in the Church understands; if we do not like the Doctrine of the Pope, Church, or Council, we may gainsay them all, and hold our own sense of scripture: We enjoy the prerogative of rational creatures, we are led by our own reason, which God has given us for our conduct, and are not like Beasts, constrained to follow that of others. We follow the Rule given us by St. Paul, Rom. 14. He who eats, let him not despise him who does not eat; and who does not eat, let him not despise him who does eat, for God hath received him: That's to say, he who believes, let him not check him who does not believe as he does: And he who does not believe, let him not blame him who does believe: But let each one believe, or not believe as he thinks best in the Lord: This holy Liberty and Freedom is the Spirit of God, for, where the Spirit of God is, there is Liberty. 2 Cor 3. says the great Apostle: The Lord inspire to our Parliament, that now sits upon a perfect and new settlement of Government and Religion, to follow the foot-steps of our first renowned Reformers; to enact that there may be no other Rule of Faith, but that which we received from our Reformers, and which is laid down for us in the 39 Articles of the Church

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Church of England : That is, Scripture as each one best understands it, without regarding the judgment, sense, or interpretation of any but the pure Word of God, as we understand it, and to enact penal Laws against any so bold and uncharitable, as to censure or blame the Tenets of any congregation, be it Lutheranism, Presbytery, Arianism, Judaism, or Paganism, or any Doctrine whatever, that any man of sound judgment thinks in his conscience to be the sense and Doctrine of Scripture.

Three things make me hope that this Treatise will be welcome to the well inclined and pious Reader of our Reformed Church : First, that there is not one Author quoted in this Book, but our own Doctors, learned and godly children of the Reformation ; and thus I observe, that my reader may know there's not a jot of any Doctrine here but what is of the Reformation ; and also advertise our Writers and School-men, how much they discredit our Reformed Church, by making so much use of Popish Doctors and Books in their Writings, as if we had not great and learned Men of our own ; if we look into our Bishops and Ministers Libraries, we shall meet but Books either of confessedly Papists, or strongly suspected of Popery ; and you shall hardly meet in any of them, the works of Luther, Calvin, Beza, or any of our own Authors, if you do not meet some Comedies, or Romances : If you read our modern Writers, you shall find their Books to be stuff with Arguments stolen from Strapleton, Peron, Bellarmine, and other Popish Doctors, whereas they ought to take their Doctrine from Luther, Calvin, and our other first Reformers, Apostles raised by Gods Heavenly Spirit ; Oracles by whose mouths and pens he delivered the pure and Orthodox Doctrine of the Gospel ; Heavenly Fountains, from which we ought to drink the Doctrine of the Reformation : Therefore I have made a particular study for the comfort of my Reader, not to profane this Treatise with any quotation of any Popish Writer, none but our own Doctors.

Secondly, my Reader will be pleased with this Treatise, because I do not oblige him to believe the contents of it : if he
mislikes

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mislikes any Doctrine couched in this Book, let him not believe it; what I printed is to maintain his liberty for to believe or not believe what he please, and that none can say black in his eye, for believing whatever he judges to be the sense of Scripture, let all others think of it what they will; for, our Rule of Faith, as I will prove, being Scripture as each person understands it; who can be so bold as to check you for teaching and believing what you understand Scripture to say? Some Doctrines there are in this Book delivered by Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Beza, and others, which our Church of England and some others do call Blasphemies and scandalous Tenets; and their irreverence and arrogance is run so far as to condemn those blessed men, for teaching such Tenets, and say that they swerved from the Truth; and had their frailties, insomuch that many of us are ashamed to own those great men to have been our Reformers and leaders: This is an impiety altogether insupportable, it cannot be suffered with patience, that such Apostolical men, who were undeniably our first Masters of the Reformation, should be so vilified and abused: Therefore I do prove, that there's no Doctrine delivered by them, but is to be esteemed and called the Doctrine of the Reformation: And can be according the principles of the Reformed Church, believed and taught by any Reformed child: For what is our Rule of Faith in the Reformation, but Scripture, as each person of sound judgment understands it? consequently what is the Doctrine of the Reformation, but what any person of sound judgment understands to be of Scripture: Whatever Doctrine therefore Luther, Calvin, or others judged to be of Scripture; How can you deny it to be the Doctrine of the Reformation, or blame them for teaching and believing it, if you do not like it? The most you can in justice do, is not to believe it: But you cannot justly say it's not the Doctrine of the Reformation, because it's Scripture, as understood by persons of good judgment: Nor can you in justice blame them, or any other for believing it, if they like it: For, must not we believe what we judge in our conscience to be the Doctrine of Scripture.

Lastly,

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Lastly, my Reader will be pleased with the sincerity and plain dealing of this Treatise, as much as we are all offended by the dissimulation and double dealing of our modern writers, whose aim and scope in the Books they give out seems to be nothing else, but to say somewhat, whereby they may be thought to be no Papists, and nothing is less found in their writings, than the pure and Orthodox Doctrine of the Reformation; and what is to be bemoan'd, that you'll hardly see in the Houses or Hands of the flock the Works of Luther, Calvin, or our other first Reformers, they are hid from us, to keep us in ignorance of the true Reformed Doctrine, and we see but Bramhal, Tillotson, Taylor, Stillingfleet, Thordick, and such others, whose Doctrine is neither Popery, nor of the Reformation, but a new compound of both, they do so mangle the Questions controverted with their Scholastical subtilties and distinctions, as if they were ashamed to own openly our Tenets, and did endeavour to get the Opinion of moderate sober men with the Papists, by drawing as near as their Interest can permit them to their Doctrine. Ask them if we be obliged to believe the Doctrine and sense of Scripture delivered by a general Council? Our first Reformers resolved roundly that we are not: Nay, Luther says expressly we are bound to gainsay, and work against the Decrees of any Council: But our modern Doctors answer with a pretty distinction, There's a civil obligation, quoth one, but no obligation in conscience: There's an obligation in conscience, says another, provided you do not believe they are infallible. You may believe they are infallible objectively or terminatively, says another. But not subjectively: They are infallible in Fundamental points, says another, but not in inferiour Truths. Another will come yet, and say they are absolutely infallible in all Articles, and thus by little, and little the Papists gain ground against us, and the lustre of our Reformation is Clouded by the cowardliness, or sincerity, or Hypocrisie of our modern teachers. 1 Kings 18. How long halt ye between two Opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: But if Baal, then follow him. Luther, Cal-

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Calvin, Beza, and our other first Reformers were raised by God to teach us the purity of the Gospel: Let us not be ashamed to follow their Doctrine: To Speak, Preach, and Believe as they did: Therefore, I do propose their Doctrine in this Treatise in its native Colours, that if you like it, you may believe it, and if any be so bold as to say you believe false or scandalous Doctrine, you must answer, It's the Doctrine of the Reformation, because it's Scripture as understood by Persons of Judgment and the greatest Oracles we had: And if you do not like it, you may deny it, but beware never to blame or check any other for believing it. This is the Holy Liberty of the GOSPEL and of our Primitive REFORMATION.

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First Dialogue.

I S M A E L. I have read your Preface and Principles, and methinks you drive to establish a new Religion; for that unlimited Liberty, which you assert for to believe or not believe, whatever we please, with a safe Conscience, is not allowed by any of our Reformed Congregations; and it were to be wisht, you should rather stick to some one of the Congregations now Establishd, than to erect a new one, for we have but too many already.

Isaac. The Lord forbid I should think or speak otherwise than as becometh a true Child of the Reformation: If you will oblige me to believe Scripture as Interpreted by the *Lutheran* Church (the like I say of any other Congregation,) and deny the Tenets of all others, what difference betwixt me and a Papist in the Election of my Religion? For the Papist's Religion must be no other, but Scripture as Interpreted by the Pope and Councils; my Religion must be Scripture as Interpreted by the *Lutheran* Church, and no other; my Judgment and Conscience therefore is as much constrained as that of the Papist; and our separation from Popery will come to be but an exchange of one Slavery for another; in *that*, our Judgments and Consciences were Slaves to the Pope and Councils; in *this*, we are Slaves to the *Lutheran* Church: We became a Reformation by shaking off the Yoke of Popery

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from our Judgments, and leaving them free for to believe Scripture, as with the assistance of Gods Spirit, each one best understands it ; and if we will continue a Reformation, we must not submit again our Judgments to any other, but retain that blessed Liberty we recovered for to believe the Tenets of any Congregation. I confess this Liberty is not allowed by any one particular Congregation, as you observe ; but you must also grant me, that it is allowed and taken by the whole Body of the Reformation, for in this whole Body, as it comprehends *Protestants, Lutherans, Presbyterians, &c.* One Congregation believes what the other denys, and in any of them a man may live with a safe Conscience (which you will not deny ;) therefore any man has full liberty for to believe or deny with a safe Conscience the Tenets of any Congregation : Hence it follows, (and to my grief I speak it,) that no particular Congregation, be it of *England, France, or Germany*, has the true Spirit of the Reformation, in doting so much upon their particular Tenets, as to think they cannot be as well denyed, as believed ; and in looking upon them with so passionate eyes, as to censure, check and force others to believe them : You shall see by this discourse, that the true Spirit of the Reformation is not in any one particular Congregation separately taken from the rest ; for each particular Congregation constrains as much as it can, all People to believe its own Tenets : Protestancy would have us all to be Protestants, and would root *Lutherans* out of the World as well as *Papery* ; *Lutherans* would, if they could, draw all to their own Net ; *Presbytery* esteems it self to be the best of all, and would crush Protestancy if it could : This then is the Spirit of each particular Congregation, a *limiting, confining* Spirit to some particular Tenets, with an exclusion of all others ; but look on the whole Body of our Reformation, as it includes all Reformed Congre-

gregations distinct from Popery ; there is a Holy extension of Spirit and liberty for to be either *Lutherans*, *Presbyterians*, *Protestants*, and any thing but *Popery* ; and whatever any Congregation may say of another, but all unanimously agree that the Spirit of the Lord is in the whole Body of the Reformation ; since therefore that in this whole Body, there is a latitude and Liberty for to Profess divers and opposite Tenets, and that each Tenet is believed by one, and denied by others ; we must grant that this Holy Liberty for to believe or deny any Tenets we please, is the true Spirit of our Holy Reformation.

It's not therefore to be wisht, as you do, that I should stick to any one particular Congregation or Tenets ; for such a restriction is meer Popery ; and your bemoaning the multiplicity of our Congregations is profane and Popish : No, it's a blessing of the Lord upon our Reformation, for which we shall never sufficiently thank him, that we see it divided into so many Godly branches. *In the House of my Father*, said Christ, *there are many mansions*, *John 14. 2* :

Ismael. By your discourse you seem to allow that we may with a safe Conscience change Religions as often as we please, and be to day a *Protestant*, to morrow a *Lutheran*, next day a *Presbyterian*, and so run over all.

Isaac. I know you will be startl'd at my answer ; for I am not Ignorant that all men apprehended it to be absurd to change and run over so many Religions ; but truth must be declared, though it may seem a scandal to the *Jews*, and a folly to the *Gentiles* : It's therefore the Doctrine of the Reformation that we may with a safe Conscience be to day *Protestants*, to morrow *Lutherans* ; in France *Huguenots*, in Hungary *Antitrinitarians* ; in Poland *Socinians* ; and in London of any Religion but *Popery*.

Ismael. For shame, you foully impose upon the Re-

formation ; there's not any Congregation that teaches such a scandalous and absurd Doctrine.

Isaac. By your favour, I love the Reformation as the Apple of my Eye, and will never yield to any in my Zeal for its honour and Doctrine ; I am so far from imposing upon it, that I will evidence your error in denying this to be its Doctrine, and it will appear that whoever will deny it to be very lawful to change Religions as time and occasion requires, must renounce the best and Fundamental Principles of our Reformation, and must impiously condemn the practice of our first Reformers.

Ismael. How will you make it out that this Doctrine is grounded upon the Fundamental Principles of our Reformation ; whereas there is not one Congregation of ours, but abhors it ?

Isaac. Sir, you may well perceive by the tenor of my discourse, that I am Piously and Charitably jealous with each particular Congregation, and that my drift is to shew that each of them, none excepted, swerves from and Transgresses against the true Spirit and solid Principles of the Reformation, as will further appear in this discourse.

It's uncontestedly true that the Rule of Faith of the Reformation, is Scripture, as the humble of Heart assisted with the Spirit of the Lord understands it ; for *Lutherans* will never admit their Rule of Faith to be Scripture, as Interpreted by the Church of *England* ; but as Interpreted by themselves ; nor will *England* admit Scripture to be the Rule of Faith, as it is Interpreted by the *Presbyterians* ; but as Interpreted by the Church of *England* : so that the Doctrine of each Congregation is but Scripture, as interpreted by them, and whereas all these Congregations joyntly compose the whole Body of the Reformation, and each Congregation is truly a member of the Reformation ; the Doctrine of the Reformation comes to be Scripture,

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as each Congregation, and Person of sound Judgment in the Reformation, (says the Church of England in her 39 Articles) Interprets it. This being an uncontrouled truth, what Man of ever so sound Judgment, but may Read to day Scripture, as Interpreted by the Lutheran Church, and Judge in his Conscience that Interpretation and Doctrine to be true: Consequently he may with a safe Conscience Profess that Religion; soon after he may meet *Calvins* Books, and charm'd with the admirable strength of his reasons and glosses upon Scripture, he may judge in his Conscience, he is to be preferr'd before *Luther*, and so may lawfully forsake *Lutheranism* for *Calvinism*; then again he hits upon Scripture as Interpreted by the Church of England, whose Doctrine ravishes him with that decency of Ceremonies, that Majesty of her Liturgy, that Harmony of her Hierarchy, he is convinc'd it's better than *Calvinism*, and embraces it: Then again, he reads the Works of *Arius*, and convinc'd by the energy of his Arguments and Texts of Scripture produced by him, may alter his Judgment and become an *Arian*: Wherein can you say does this Man transgress against the Doctrine or Principles of the Reformation? Does he forsake the Reformation, because he forsakes *Lutheranism* for *Calvinism*? No sure; for *Calvinism* is as much of the Reformation as the other: Is not *Protestancy* as much the Doctrine of the Reformation as *Presbytery*? tho' he changes therefore one for the other he still holds the Doctrine of the Reformation: Is not the Doctrine of the Reformation Scripture, not as *Protestants* only, or *Presbyterians* only Interpret it, but as any Congregation or Man of sound Judgment holds it? It is therefore evident that according to the Doctrine and Principles of the Reformation, he may with a safe Conscience change Religions, and be to day of one, to morrow of another, until he runs all over. Point me out any Congregation, (the obsti-

nate Papists excepted,) who will dare say, I cannot live with a safe Conscience in any other Congregation but in it self; all other Congregations will laugh at it; Why then may not I lawfully forsake any Congregation, and pass to another? And be in *England* a Protestant, in *Germany* a Lutheran, in *Hungary* an Antitrinitarian or Socinian.

Ismael. It's against the grain of Mans reason to believe that we can with a safe Conscience change Religions, as you say: If you be a Protestant, and you judge it to be the true Religion, you are bound to stick to it, and never to change it.

Isaac. If I did discourse with a Papist, I would not wonder he should say it's against the grain of Mans reason to believe it lawful; but I admire that a Child of the Reformation, be he of what Congregation he will, should be so Ignorant of his Principles, as to say a Man cannot change Religions when he please: Nor do I undertake to prove against the Papist, that this is lawful, but I undertake to prove it lawful against any Reformed Child, or force him to deny the Principles of the Reformation. Is it against reason that a Man may read to day Scripture, and the *Lutherans* Interpretation upon it, and like it very well; and that he should in this case embrace that Religion; Is it against the grain of Mans reason that this same Man should next Year afterwards hit upon *Calvins* Works upon Scripture, and after better consideration, think his Doctrine to surpass that of *Luther*; and could not he then (being oblig'd to choose the best,) forsake *Lutheranism* and stick to *Calvinism*? And is it against Mans reason that he in following Years may meet other Books of *Arians*, *Socinians*, &c. and do the like? Have not we many examples of this in our best and most renowned Reformers? Did not *Ochinus*, that great light (says B. Bale) in whose presence *England* was happy, reading Scripture, Judge the Re-

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formation to be better than Popery, and of a *Capuchin* Fryar became a Reformed; after some Years reading Scripture, he Judged *Judaism* to be better than the Reformation, and became a *Jew*. Did not *Martin Bucer*, one of our first Reformers of *England* and Composers of our Liturgy, reading Scripture, judge *Lutheranism* to be better than Popery, and of a *Dominican* Fryar, became a *Lutheran*? Soon after reading Scripture, he judged *Zuinglianism* to be better than *Lutheranism*, and became a *Zuinglian*; not long after he became a *Lutheran* again, as he Confesses, *a* and forsook *Lutheranism* the second time, and returned again to *Zuinglianism*, as *Sklosser* says. *b* Did not *Cranmer* one of our first Reformers also of *England*, and Composers of the 39 *Articles*, a Wise and Religious Man, profess Popery in *Henry the VIII.* time, and Compose a Book in defence of *Real Presence*; then in *Edward the VI.* time, upon better consideration, he professed *Zuinglianism*, and Writ a Book against *Real Presence*: then again in *Queen Mary's* Reign, being Sentenc'd to Death, he declar'd for Popery, but seeing his Recantation could not preserve his Life, he renounced Popery and Dyed a *Zuinglian*. I could tyre your Patience in reading, and mind in relating the number of our prime, and most renowned, as well first Reformers, as Learned Doctors, who without any scruple changed several times their Religions; nor in the Principles of our Reformation ought they to be blamed: For whereas our Rule of Faith is Scripture, as with the assistance of Gods Spirit we understand it, who doubts but we may to day Judge sincerely *Luther's* sense of it to be true, to morrow we may read with more attention, and Judge *Ariz's* his sense to be true; next day that of *Calvin*, and so of the rest: I do not think but that we have in *England* many Abettors of the Doctr-

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a *Epist. ad Norem.* & in *Comment. in Jo. 6. & 16. Matt.*

b *Theol. Calvin. l. 2. fol. 70.*

rine : Alas ! how many Bishops, Deans and rich Parsons do we know and have we known, who were Zealous Presbyterians, and declared Enemies of Protestantcy in our Gracious Sovereign's Exile, and no sooner was he restored, and had Bishopricks and Ecclesiastical dignities to be given, but they became stiff Protestants.

Observe the difference betwixt the Papists and us, if of a Papist you become of any other Congregation, the Popish Church Excommunicates you, thou art lookt upon as an *Heretick*, and *Apostate* ; a *stray'd Sheep* ; they will not admit you to their Communion, or Liturgy ; nay, could they well avoid you, they would never admit you to their Company ; and why ? Because they are fondly perswaded their own is the only true Religion, and all others to be Synagogues of Satan ; and if any of us will become a Papist, he must first abjure his former Profession : But if of a Protestant you should become a Presbyterian, a Lutheran, Quaker, or of any other of our Societies, you are never looked upon to be a jot the worse for it ; we are not a whit scandalized at such changes, which we daily see ; and it is an unspeakable Blessing, with what Accord, Unity, and Charity, you may see at our Liturgy and Communion, the Protestant, Presbyterian, Anabaptist, Socinian and Hugonot, all praising the Lord in one Congregation in our Churches, none bid out of the Church, none Excommunicated, no previous abjuration required of their former Tenets. and there's nothing more frequent among us than to go to the Protestant Liturgy in the morning, in the evening to the Presbyterian, especially if our Interest or convenience requires it : Can there be a more convincing proof that we esteem it all alike what Religion and Tenets we profess ? Let a *Lutheran* go to *France* ; Alas ! He will never stick to go to the *Hugonots* meeting and service ; let a Protestant go to *Germany*, he will go as cheerfully

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to the *Lutheran Church*, as in *England* to the *Protestant* : Let a *Hugonot* or *Presbyterian* go to *Hungary*, or *Poland*, he is welcome to the *Antitrinitarians*, and *Socinians* ; and when any of them returns home he will be as before.

Ismael. But can you prove this Doctrine by the Testimony of any of our Synods ? Did any teach that we may with a safe Conscience change our Religion as you say ?

Isaac. Yes I can : The Synod of *Charenton* in *France*, held about the Year 1634. expressly says, that for your Salvation it is all alike whether you be a *Calvinist*, *Lutheran*, or of any other Congregation of the Reformed, because, says this Venerable Synod, they all agree in Fundamental points, and the *Lutherans* have nothing of Superstition or Idolatry in their manner of Divine Worship. Change then as often as you list ; be a *Lutheran*, be a *Presbyterian*, be an *Anabaptist* ; by the mouth of this Synod you are assured you'll never miss to hit right. And I pray can any Synod of our times have more Authority in point of Doctrine than *Luther* our first Reformer, a man extraordinarily raised by God, (says the Synod of *Charenton*,) and replenisht with his Spirit for to repair the ruins of his Church ? He teaches *c* the Elevation of the Sacrament is Idolatry, yet he did practice it, and commanded it should be practiced in the Church of *Wittenberg* to spite the Devil *Carollstadius* : Giving you to understand that for just reasons, you may teach now one Religion, now another. *Zuinglius*, also whose virtue and learning is known to the World, says, *d* That God inspired him to Preach what Doctrine was suitable to the times ; which as it often changes, you may often change your Doctrine : And consider you if it be not therefore that Christ our Lord says his Yoke is

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c In *parva Confes. Germ. fol. 55. & in Colloq. fol. 110. d* *To. 2. fol. 202.*

ease, and his burden is light, (that is Religion,) because we can withdraw our Necks from it, as time and just reason requires.

Ismael. Could you give me any Synod of the Church of *England* which delivers this Doctrine, you would go near hand to convince me; for, that some particular Doctors should have taught or practiced it, does not prove it to be the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Isaac. And what greater Authority has a Synod of *England*, for to prove a Doctrine to be of the Reformation, than a Synod of *France*, which I have produced? Or than *Luther* and *Zuinglius* our first Reformers, inspired by God, to teach us the purity of the Gospel? What is it not from *Luther* and *Zuinglius*, that *England* received the Doctrine of the Reformation? And if *England* be so bold as to say they erred in this, what assurance can we have but that they erred in the rest? But since nothing will please you but a Synod of *England*, you shall have not one, but many. Can there be any Synod in *England* of so great Authority as our wise and prudent Parliaments? Read our Chronicles, and you ll find, that in few Years time, they changed and established different Religions by publick Acts of Parliament: In *Henry* the VIII. Reign they Voted for Popery, and made Acts and Statutes against the Reformation; In *Edward* the VI time, they banisht Popery and Voted for Zuinglianism; In *Queen Marys* they pulled down this, and set up Popery again: In *Queen Elizabeths*, they decryed this, and set up not Zuinglianism, but Protestantcy; in the midst of her Reign, they polish'd this, and added some new perfections to it; In *King James* and succeeding Kings times, Protestantcy is of a different stamp from that of *Queen Elizabeths*: Hear *Dove* in his *Exhort. to the English Recusants*, An. 1603. pag. 31. *Henry* the 8. had his Liturgy which was very good. *Edward* the 6. condemned it, and brought in another composed by *Pe-*
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ter Martyr and Bucer: In Elizabeths time, that was condemned, and another approved, and in the middle of her Reign, her Liturgy was also misliked, and a new one introduced, we are so wanton that nothing will content us but Novelries.

Ismael. Dove does not commend this Doctrine, for he calls that frequent exchange of Religion *Wantonness*, and love of *Novelty*.

Isaac. It's no great matter what he says of it; my drift is but to convince you that this is the Doctrine and Practice of the best Member of our Reformation; even of *England*, and if you be convinc'd it's the Doctrine of the Reformation, you cannot deny but that it is good Doctrine: If *Dove* calls it *Wantonness*, *S. Paul*, *Ephes.* 4. 22. *Coloss.* 3. 9. and *Rom.* 6. 6. commends it, and exhorts us to put off the Old Man, with its deeds, (that's Popery with its Ceremonies,) and put on the New Man, (that's the Reformation) where there's neither *Greek* nor *Jew*, *Circumcision*, nor *Incircumcision*, *Barbarian*, or *Scythian*, Bound or Free, but *Christ* is all, and in all: That's to say; where there's no distinction of Protestants and Presbyterians, Socinians, or Arians; it's all one which Religion you profess.

Ismael. But is there no Tenet of Religion which we are indispensably obliged to hold?

Isaac. Yes there is, and no more but one: *We are bound to have Faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God, and Saviour of the World.* This is the Substance of Christian Religion; be an Arian, be a Presbyterian, be a Socinian, or what you please, be also plung'd to your ears in Wickedness of Life, and Manners, so you have Faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God, and Redeemer of the World, and live in Charity, you will be a Member of the true Church, and be saved. Do not imagine this is any new Doctrine invented by me; search the vulgar sort of our Reformed Brethren, you shall

shall get thousands of this Opinion in our Realm ; search the Books of our Learned Doctors, you shall find it in them also. Doctor *Morton*, in his much applauded Book, dedicated to Queen *Elizabeth*, for which he deserved a Bishoprick, e says: *The Arian Church is to be esteemed a true Church, because they hold the true substance of Christian Religion, which is Faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God, and Redeemer of the World:* And again in the same place, sect. 4. whose Title, is, *Hereticks are Members of the Church*, he says, *whosoever believes in Jesus Christ, though by wickedness of Life, or Heresie in Doctrine, they should err in Doctrine, they are still true Members of the Church.* Therefore our Learned f *Fox*, g Doctor *Field*, and *Illiricus*, say the Greek Church, notwithstanding their error, in denying the *Procession* of the H. Ghost from the Son, are Holy Members of the true Church, because they have Faith in Jesus Christ.

Ismael. Sure you will not say this Doctrine is of the Reformation, or can be safely believed.

Isaac. I do admire how you can doubt of it, and that it may be believed: For what is the Doctrine of the Reformation but as we have said in our Principles, Scripture as Interpreted by any Man of sound Judgement in the Church? And were not Doctor *Morton*, *Fox*, *Field*, and *Illiricus*, Men of sound Judgement, eminent Learning and Godliness? If therefore this be Scripture as Interpreted by them, how can you deny it to be the Doctrine of the Reformation?

Ismael. And what Jesus Christ are we obliged to believe in? For Jesus Christ, as believed by the *Arians*, *Socinians*, *Luther* and *Calvin*, is far different from Jesus Christ, as commonly believed by the Protestants, and Popish Church, we believe in Jesus Christ the Son of

e *The Kingdom of Isra.* pag. 9. f *Acts & mon.* pag. 36. lib. 3. c. 5. *Catal. reseruum.* pag. 976. & 978.

of God, of one and the same substance and nature with the Father; they believe in a Jesus Christ, Son of God, but of a distinct and different nature and substance from the Father.

Isaac. Pish! That's but a nicety; believe what you please, and what you understand by Scripture to be true, and have Charity:

Ismael. I confess you have puzzled, but yet not wholly convinced me; were I but perswaded that what you have discoursed is truly the Doctrine of the Reformation, I would cheerfully embrace it, and I will be better informed by your self, but not tire your Patience: We will meet again and pursue our Discourse upon this subject.]

Second Dialogue.

ISMAEL. Reflecting in my solitude upon your last discourse, I find it bottom'd upon a false Principle; for you suppose that whatever Doctrine is of *Luther*, *Calvin*, or any of our Learned Doctors, Synods, Parliaments, or Congregations, is the Doctrine of the Reformation, and may without any more proof or scruple, be believed by any Reformed Child; who but sees this is ridiculous, to fasten the Doctrine and absurd Opinions of each particular Doctor, or Congregation upon the whole Body: This is the uncharitable and unreasonable art of the Papists, who keep a great coyl with some exhorbitant Opinions of *Luther* and *Calvin*, and would perswade their Profelites, they are the Tenets of the Reformation; whereas the Reformation disclaims those Opinions as much as the *Pope* does:

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And they do not, poor People, observe how many absurd and scandalous Doctrines we meet in their *Casuists* and *Divines*, which when we reproach them with, they answer, *it's not the Doctrine of their Church, but of some particular Doctors*; as if we might not with as much Justice as they, answer the same.

Isaac. Your reflection is good, and my discourse will fall the ground if I do not prove that Principle, which will be no hard task: Let us imagine we are here a full Synod of *Protestants, Presbyterians, Hugonots, Lutherans, Antitrinitarians, Anabaptists, Quakers*, and of all and each of our Congregations; our Reformation is not any of these Congregations, with an exclusion of the rest, but all of them jointly; for whatsoever Congregation would say it self alone is the Reformation, and no other, would be hiss'd at by the rest; and justly; because that our Reformation imports two points essentially: First, a Profession of Christianity, according to the Rule of the Word of God, and a detestation or abjuration of Popish Errors; and none of these Congregations but does both.

Ismael. I know some of these, *Pharisee* like, despise others, and look upon them not as Reformed, but as putrid members; but the Lord forbid I should be so void of Charity; I see no just challenge any can have to the Title of Reformation, which all have not.

Isaac. Let us ask this Synod by what Rule of Faith does the Reformation walk? What must a Man believe for to be a *true Reformed*? *Protestants* will say, that Scripture and Apostolical Tradition; but *Protestants* say of *Papists*, and *Presbyterians* and *Anabaptists* say of *Protestants*, that many humane Inventions are obtruded upon us as Apostolical Traditions; that we have no way to discern the one from the other, and consequently Tradition, as being an unknown thing unto us, cannot be our Rule; Others will say, that
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Scripture and the indubitable consequences out of it; is our Rule, all will grant this; But then enters the Controversie, if the consequences of *Lutherans* be such, and if the consequences of *Presbyterians* be indubitable out of Scripture, and each Congregation will say that their peculiar Tenets are indubitable consequences out of Scripture, and the rest must allow it to be true, or deny such a Congregation to be of the Reformation; Others will say that Scripture, and the four first General Councils, with the Apostles and *Athanasius's* Creed are our Rule of Faith; but most of the Assembly will no more admit the four first, than the subsequent Councils, nor *Athanasius* his Creed, more than that of *Trent*; nor will the *Quakers*, *Soci-nians*, and others value the Apostles Creed.

But there is none of all the Assembly, who will not admit Scripture, that's the pure written word of God, to be a sacred and full Rule of Faith, because it's replenish'd with Divine light and all Heavenly instruction necessary for our Salvation: And such as add, as a part of our Rule of Faith, the Apostles or *Athanasius* his Creed, or the four first General Councils, they will confess that all they contain, is express'd in Gods written Word, and are but a plainer, or more distinct expression or declaration of the Contents of Scripture.

Isaiah. Truly I must grant you this, that I have been often present at several discourses of Protestants with Papists, and never could I hear a Protestant make Councils, Tradition, or any thing else, the Test of their discourse but only Scripture, not but that I could hear them say and pretend in their discourses that Apostolical Tradition, and the four first Councils were for them against Popery, but still their main strength and ultimate refuge was Scripture, for whenever they harp upon that string of Tradition and Councils, the Papists are visibly too hard for them, and then they

run to Scripture, than which there is no *plus ultra*. I have been also often at several discourses berwixt Protestants, Presbyterians and our Brethren of other Congregations, and have observed that the Protestant, for to defend his Liturgy, Rites, and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, and her Episcopacy against the others, could never defend himself by Scripture alone, and placed his main strength against them in Tradition, Primitive Councils, and ancient Fathers, all which the others rejected, and reproached the Protestant with Popery, for making use of that Weapon; that if they would stick to those Principles as their Rule of Faith, they must admit many Tenets of Popery, which they disavow, that nothing but Scripture is a sufficient warrant and Rule of Faith: And I find by all I could ever well understand, that it's the General apprehension and belief of all the Reformation, that Scripture abundantly contains all we are obliged to believe; and is our sole and only Rule of Faith, and that our recourse to Tradition, Councils, Fathers, &c. are but shifts of some of our Doctors, who being *Non plus* in their particular engagements, and Sophistries, patch the incoherency of their discourses with these rags of Popery.

Isaac. I commend your ingenuity, but not that heat which transports you to check our Doctors, for their glosses and particular Doctrines upon Scripture, which, as the *Manna* relisht of all sorts of Victuals, which the Eater fancied, admits several senses according to the different Spirits and measure of light that God gives to the Reader, and it is undoubtedly the Spirit of the Reformation to follow what sense of it he likes best, and not to check others following this or that as they please: *Lutherans, Protestants, Presbyterians, &c.* have all for their Rule of Faith Scripture, which each of them Interprets in a different sense; *Luther* for the *Real*, [*Protestants* for the *Figurative*] presence; *Pro-*

Protestants for Episcopacy; *Presbyterians* against it; and so of others: And tho each esteems his own sense to be the best, yet none is so bold as to say the others may not be saved in their own sense of it, or deny them to be true Children of the Reformation; nay, that Venerable Synod of *Charenton*, as I quoted above, has declared that the *Lutherans*, tho opposite to them in their chief Tenets, are their beloved Brethren, and have nothing Idolatrous or Superstitious in their manner of Divine Worship: The Fundamental reason of all this is, that our Rule of Faith, is but Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment understands it.

Ismael. I grant all your discourse as to this particular; for it's certain, *Lutherans* will not admit Scripture as Interpreted by *Protestants*, but as Interpreted by themselves; and so of each other Congregation.

Isaac. If you admit *our Rule* is Scripture as each understands it; then you must grant that *our Doctrine* of the Reformation, is whatever Doctrine each person of sound Judgment understands to be of Scripture; and from this, it appears plainly that my Principle whereat you bogl'd is true; That, whatever Doctrine is professed by any of our Congregations, Synods, Parliaments, Doctors, or particular Doctor of our Reformation, is to be truly reputed and esteemed the Doctrine of our Reformation; which Principle being true, my discourse of yesterday is undeniable, that you may change Religion as often as you please, and remain still a true Reformed Child.

Ismael. But you have said that not only the Doctrine of each Congregation and Synod, is the Doctrine of the Reformation; but also whatever any one particular Doctor teaches, and this seems to be very absurd.

Isaac. It's not so absurd, as it is true; I'll prove by the Principles of our Reformed Church, by the testimonies of our most learned and best Doctors and Re-

formers, and by reason and experience, that the Doctrine of any particular Doctor among us, has as much right to be called and esteemed the Doctrine of the Reformation, as Protestancy, Presbytery, or Lutheranism; for, what is Lutheranism, but the Judgment of *Luther* a particular Doctor, against the whole Church of *Rome*? what is Calvinism, but what *Calvin* a particular Doctor, judged to be the sense of Scripture against that same Church? What is Quakerism, but honest *Naylor's* Godly and Pious Sentiments upon Scripture. It's undeniably the Principle of our Reformed Church, that our *Rule of Faith* is Scripture as Interpreted, not only by Synods or Congregations, but by any Person of sound Judgment in the Church. No Congregation or Synod is to us a Rule of Faith, because all are fallible; but Gods Written Word, as each one understands it; and if we do not like the sense of it delivered by any Council, Synod, or Congregation, we may safely deny it: Therefore our great *Calvin*, *a* says, and proves with great energy of Scripture and Reason, that *we are not obliged to the Decisions and Doctrine of any Council, Synod, or Congregation, if after having examined Scripture, we do not find their Interpretation and sense of it, is conformable to the Word of God.* Let Synods and Congregations say what they will, if any particular Doctor thinks his own private sense of it to be better, he may stick to it against them all, and be a good true Child of the Reformation; as *Arminius* in *Holland* did withstand the Synods of *Dordrecht* and *Delft*; as *Luther* and *Calvin* did against *Rome*. *I will be free*, says our unparalleled Proto-Apostle *Luther*, *b* *I will not submit my self to the Authority of Councils, Church, Doctors, Universities, or Fathers, but will teach and preach whatever I think to be true.* Did ever any Apostle speak with more courage? And the blessed man

man acted with no less; he knew full well the whole stream of Antiquity, Doctors, Fathers and Councils were against him, as he confesses himself, and did not care a rush for them all: *Lay aside, says he, call Arms of Orthodox Antiquity, of Schools of Divinity, Authority of Fathers, Councils, Popes, and consent of Ages; we receive nothing but Scripture; but so that we must have the Authority of Interpreting it.*

Nor was it only Luther and Calvin spoke thus, but all our first blessed Reformers; and why? Because our Rule of Faith is Scripture, not as Interpreted by the Church of England, (*France will not admit it,*) nor as Interpreted by the Quakers, (*the Anabaptists, and Independents will not hear it*) nor as Interpreted by Luther, (*Calvin rejects it,*) nor as Interpreted by Calvin, (*Thorndick and Bramhall will not yield to it,*) nor will *Stillingfleet* stand to their Interpretation; nor others to that of *Stillingfleet*. Finally our Rule of Faith is Scripture, not as Interpreted by any, but as each Congregation, Synod, particular Doctor, or man of sound Judgment Interprets it, and consequently, whatever Doctrine any man of sound Judgment judges to be of Scripture, is to be esteemed the Doctrine of the Reformation; and you may safely believe it, if you like it, and remain still as truly a Reformed Child, as the proudest Protestant of England.

Ismael. Can you prove that our Rule of Faith is Scripture, as any particular Doctor or Person of sound Judgment understands it?

Isaac. Behold how convincingly; first we have heard Luther, quoted but now, say, We receive nothing but Scripture, but so, as that we must have the Authority for to Interpret it: Hear him again; *d The Governours and Pastors have power to Teach, but the Sheep must give their Judgment, whether they propose*

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e Lib. de serv. Arbit. cont. Erasmi. 1. edit. d In Colloq. mensal. fol. 118.

the voice of Christ, or of Strangers. And again; *e* Christ has taken from the Bishops, Councils, and Pastors, the right of Judging of Doctrine; and given it to all Christians in General; and the Rule is Scripture as each one will think fit to Interpret it. And consequently to this, we have heard him say above, I will be free and will not submit to Doctors, Councils, or Pastors, but will teach whatever I think to be true. Barlow, *f* The Apostles have given to each particular, the Right and Power of Interpreting, and Judging by his inward Spirit what is True; it's needless that either Man, or Angel, Pope, or Council, should instruct you, the Spirit working in the Heart, and Scripture are to each particular Person most assured Interpreters. Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, says the same, *g* The People must be Discerners and Judges of what is Taught. Our Religion has no other Rule of Faith, (says our French Reformation by the mouth of Dumoulin, *h* Drellincourt, and the Holy Synod of Charenton,) but the Written Word of God, as Interpreted by Us. Lastly, says the Church of England, in the 6th. Artic. of their 39. We have no other Rule of Faith, but Scripture as each person of sound Judgment in the Church understands it, and what is proved by it: And again in the Catholick Doctrine of the Church of England, pag. 103. which is but an exposition of the 39. Articles, Our Rule of Faith is but Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment in the Church understands it: Authority is given to the Church, and to each person of sound Judgment in it, to Judge in Controversies of Faith, and this is not the private Judgment of our Church, but also of our Brethren of Foreign Countries.

Ishmael. I confess, not only these, but many other Doctors abet your discourse, and the General

Vogue

e To. 2. Witem. fol. 374. & 375. *f* In Defens. Art. Reliq. Protest. pag. 199. *g* In his true Differ. par. 2. pag. 353. *h* Bouclier de la Foy.

Vogue of our Reformation, is for Scripture as each one understands it; but alas! You see well, that we can never settle any Religion, or Church, by such a Rule of Faith.

Isaac. You can never settle any but this, *That every Man may without let or hinderance believe what he please; and why should not this be a good Religion?* If Scripture as each one understands it be not our Rule of Faith; if we must be constrained to believe Scripture not as we understand it, but as it is understood by this or that Congregation; what difference betwixt us and *Papists*? They must believe Scripture as Interpreted by the Pope and Councils; have ever so much light from God, be ever so wise and witty, you must depose your own Judgment, and submit to that of the Pope, Council, and Popish Church: To this pass we are come also; we must believe the Kings Supremacy, Episcopacy, Figurative Presence, tho perhaps we do not Judge by Scripture it be true Doctrine; we are constrained by Penal Laws, and Acts of Parliament to believe them, as *Papists* by their Inquisition; and why? Because the Church of England understands by Scripture, it's true; and if you reply you do not Interpret Scripture so, you'll not be heard; you must submit, and believe against your Judgment; and what's this but plain *Popish* Tyranny over Mens Consciences? Did *Luther* and *Calvin* forsake the Pope and Councils, for to submit their Judgments to any other? No, but to follow Scripture as each one of them understood it: And tho' *Luther* was a Man raised by God, and replenish'd with his Spirit to repair the ruins of the Church, yet *Calvin* did no more submit to him, than *Luther* did to the Pope; nor did *Zuinglius* submit to *Calvin*, but followed his own sense of Scripture, nor did *Oecolampadius* submit to *Zuinglius*; but every one searched the Scripture, believed and taught what they thought to be true; and

and thus we became a Reformation of Popery: If therefore we will continue a Reformation, and walk by the Spirit of our first blessed Reformers; we must not be constrained to believe any Mans sense of Scripture: We must believe whatever we think to be true, and have no other Rule of Faith but Scripture, as each one understands it.

Ismael. And what then? What do you infer from this discourse?

Isaac. This consequence; that whereas no true Child of the Reformation, be he of what Congregation he will, can justly deny our Rule of Faith to be Scripture, as any person of sound judgment Interprets it; it follows unavoidably that the Doctrine of the Reformation is, *Whatever any person of sound Judgment Interprets to be the true sense of Scripture*, and whatever *Luther, Calvin, Beza*, or any other of sound judgment in the Reformation, since its first rise until this day, taught to be the true sense of Scripture, is to be called and esteemed the Doctrine of the Reformation, tho' to others of this or that Congregation, it may seem to be wicked and scandalous Doctrine.

And now let me answer to an Objection you made against this Principle in our entrance to this discourse: You objected that many Popish Doctors and *Casuits*, delivered scandalous and base Doctrines, which the Papists will not admit to be the Doctrine of their Church, tho' delivered by Popish Doctors, and thence you pretended, that the particular sentiments of private Doctors of the Reformation are not to be called the Doctrine of our Church. But be pleased to observe the difference betwixt *Popery* and our Reformation; the Rule of Faith in *Popery* is Scripture, as Interpreted by the Pope and Council, or their Church; they will admit no other; consequently no Doctrine is to be called *Popery*, but what is Judged by the Pope and his Church, or Council, to be the sense of Scripture;

ture; and if any Doctor or University holds any sense contrary to theirs, it is to be called the Doctrine of that particular person, and not the Doctrine of the Popish Church, because their Rule of Faith is not Scripture, as Interpreted by any person of sound judgment, but as Interpreted by their Pope and Council. But whereas our Rule of Faith in the Reformation is Scripture, as each person of sound judgment Interprets it; whatever Doctrine, or sense, is said by any Man to be of Scripture, is justly to be called the Doctrine of the Reformation: For example, *Melancthon*, a Man of sound Judgment, great Learning, and of an upright Conscience, Taught *Bigamy* to be the Doctrine of Scripture; *Beza* Taught the Lords-Supper might be administer'd in any kind of Victuals, as well as in Bread and Wine: *Calvin* Taught that Christ despaired on the Cross, and suffer'd the pains of Hell after his Death: Why then, let all the Bishops and Universities of *England* condemn this Doctrine; let all the Synods of *France* and *Germany* decry it, the Doctrine will be still of the Reformation, because it's Scripture as Interpreted by Men of sound Judgment.

Ismael. The heat of your discourse has tired you, and my memory is sufficiently loaden with what you have said; let me digest it in my private retirement and we will meet again.

Isaac. Content, carry with you these three points which I have proved convincingly; First, *our Rule of Faith* is Scripture, not as Interpreted by this or that, but by any Man of sound Judgment; secondly, it follows hence that the Doctrine of the Reformation must be, and ought to be called whatever any Man of sound Judgment says is the sense of Scripture: Thirdly, it follows we may change Religions as often as we please.

Third Dialogue.

Ismael. I remember well the summary of your last discourse given me in three points, and I find the second to be absurd and repugnant to reason : you'll never perswade it, tho' you pleaded for it with great energy ; what if a silly Woman, Cobler, or other Tradesmen, read Scripture, and give their sense of it, that, forsooth, must be called the Doctrine of the Reformation ? And it shall be lawful for them to believe it, against the Doctrine of the whole Church.

Isaac. Do not limit Gods infinite goodness, by measuring his mercies towards his Creatures with your narrow apprehensions: Take notice, he says, he has chosen the weak and contemptible of the World for to confound the strong ones : * *I confess unto you Father, that you have hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them to the little ones.* And therefore he chose poor simple Fishermen to be his Apostles : I know its the practice of Papists, and from them your Church of England borrows it, to despise the Ministry of Women, Tradesmen, and Illiterate People, in Preaching, Teaching, and Interpreting Scripture ; but S. Paul tells us, ** *The Word of God is not bound ;* That's to say, is not entayld on the learned, rich, or great ones ; the † *Wind bloweth where it listeth*: Our Bishops and Ministers would make a Monopoly of the Word of God, and have themselves

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* Matt. 12. ** Tim. 2. † Jo: 4^o

to be the only Retailers of it; for to have some plausible Title for to enjoy great Rents, and shear the Flock. But we have seen, as well among the *Quakers*, as in other Congregations, silly Women and Tradesmen, replenisht with Gods Spirit, Preach and expound the great Mysteries of our Religion with as much of good success and edification of the Auditory, as any Penny-Book Man in England.

Ismael. It seems you approve the Ministry of Women and silly Tradesmen, for preaching and teaching the Flock; and if so, you'll overthrow our Hierarchy of Bishops and Ministers.

Isaac. It matters not much for you to know what I approve or condemn; but to know what the Doctrine of the Reformation is; it's this; That none can Teach, Preach, administer Sacraments, or exercise Ecclesiastical functions, if he be not in Holy Orders, Bishop, Minister or Deacon; for the Church of England Teaches it, and you may believe it if you please. You may also deny it, and say, any Woman or Tradesman, has as much power for to Preach and Administer the Sacraments, as the richest Bishop in England: This also is the Doctrine of the Reformation as well as the former, because *Quakers*, *Presbyterians*, *Brownists*, *Anabaptists*, &c. Believe and Teach it, and they are Men of as sound Judgments, and as good Reformers as Protestants; nay, the most learned of our Reformers, teach and commend the Power of Women for to exercise Spiritual functions, and Administer the Sacraments: *a Saumaïse*, *Peter Martyr*, and *b Zuinglius*, expressly defend the Priesthood as well of Women as of Men: And *c Luther* proves it efficaciously; *The first Office of a Priest*, says he, is to Preach, this is common to all, even

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a In lib. ad *Corin.* c. 11. *b* In *Ex. plan.* Art. 17. *c* *To. 2.* de minist. *Eccles. instit.* fol. 369. & lib. de *Cap. Babyl.* c. 42. *Ordin.* & lib. de *abroganda Missa.*

Women ; the second is to Baptize ; which is also common to Women ; the third is to Consecrate their Bread and Wine, and this also is common to all as well as to Men : and in the absence of a Priest , a Woman may absolve from sins as well as the Pope, because the words of Christ, whatever ye shall untye on Earth, shall be untyed in Heaven, were said to all Christians.

And when so eminent men had not said it, reason and Scripture convinces it ; *Reason*, because that our Rule of Faith being Scripture as each Person of sound judgment understands it, many Women undoubtedly are of sound Judgment, and why should not their interpretation of Scripture pass for the Doctrine of the Reformation, as well as that of our Bishops and Ministers : *Scripture*, because we read the Samaritan Woman was the first who preached the *Messias* to the City of *Samaria*, and Christ commanded *Mary Magdalen* to go to preach his Resurrection to his Disciples ; and we know by our Chronicles that our glorious *Queen Elizabeth* of blessed memory, did not only govern the state, but was a great Apostleless in Church affairs.

Ismael. To what purpose then, have we Bishops and Ministers, who enjoy so vast revenues ; if any Man or Woman can Preach and Administer the Sacraments as well as they.

Isaac. You may believe, Bishops and Ministers are very needful for the Service of the Church ; for they being commonly learned witty Men, and having Wives, they come to instruct their Wives so well, that the good Women come in a short time to be as learned as their Husbands, and as nimble and quick in the Ecclesiastical Ministeries as they, if they were permitted to exercise them ; as some Authors of Credit relate unto us, that a Gentleman of *Constance*, writ to his Friend in a Village, (about three leagues distant from that City,) whose Inhabitants were for the most part of our *Lutheran* Reformation ; the good Pastor

exhorted his Flock to prepare for Easter Communion, and that none should presume to come to the Holy Table, but should first confess and receive absolution of his sins: Easter Holy dayes being come, such a multitude flockt to confession, that the Pastor could not satisfie the Devotion of so great a croud; he called his Wife to help him, for to hear Confessions, and give Absolutions, in which Ministry the good Lady did Labour with great satisfaction of the Penitents; but neither the Pastor, nor his virtuous Consort being able to dispatch so great a multitude, he called his Maid Servant, who did work in the Holy Ministry with as much expedition as her Master. But for all this, the Church of *Scotland, France, and all England*, (*Protestants* excepted,) will tell you that Bishops and Ministers are not needful, nay that they are very prejudicial to the *Reformation and State*; To the *Reformation*, because this Hierarchy with the Bishops Court, Surplices, Corner Caps, and other Trumperies, puts the Flock in mind of *Popery*, whereof it's a perfect Resemblance; and whilst the *Papists* see our change from them, comes to be almost no more but to substitute new Priests and Bishops in their own place for to manage more conscienciously the Rents and revenues which they profanely abused, and that those Rents and revenues are still in the Hands of an Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, they live in Hopes of recovering them some day, when our Bishops and Ministers will come to be as bad Stewards of them as they were, and that the Flock will be weary of them, and call back the Antient Possessors: It's therefore perhaps the Emisaries of the Pope do incessantly blow in our Ears; how ill our Ecclesiastical Revenues are bestowed, for to maintain Wives and Children, Pomp and Vanity of Bishops and Ministers, no less than in *Popery*. To the *State*, they seem to be prejudicial, whereas any but a Bishop or Minister, would think, it would

he more advantagious to the Common-wealth, that the King should have those Revenues for to maintain his Fleet and Army, and ease thereby the Subjects of subsidies and taxes, than that a handful of Bishops and Ministers should have them? Specially when others can Preach and Teach as well as they, for nothing, but the pleasure of being heard.

Ismael. But do not you see it would be a Sacriledge, that the King should deprive the Clergy of their Church Revenues.

Isaac. And do not you know, that almost all our Congregations do hold our Clergy to be no true Clergy, but as meer laymen as you or I; they admit no Clergy or Episcopal Character, but *Elders* cholen by the Congregation? And if they be no true Clergy, they have no right to the Church Revenues, and it's no Sacriledge to deprive them of them. The Popish Clergy in *Henry* the VIII. time, had visibly a greater right to them, than ours now have. For neither the King himself nor any other did doubt of their Right, and now most of our Congregations, do absolutely deny any Right in our Clergy to those Rents, because they are no Clergy? Yet none will be so bold, as to accuse *Henry* the VIII. of Sacriledge, for having taken the Church-livings from them, for to put them to better use. And why should we dare say, our King would commit any, for depriving our Clergy of those Rents? Believe he can lawfully do it, or believe he cannot, you'll be still a good Child of the Reformation. Believe what you please.

Ismael. This is a ticklish point, let's leave it to the consideration of our wise and prudent Parliament, and be pleased to answer to my doubt, How can we live in peace and tranquility in Religion, if our Rule of Faith be Scripture as each one understands it: I remember a discourse started in the House of Lords, not many Years ago, by his Grace the Duke of *Buckingham*,

ingham, he desired to know, what was it to be a *Protestant*; wherein did *Protestancy* properly consist? The Bishops, who were present looked one upon another, and whether they feared the difficulty of the Question, or that for modesty's sake, each expected to hear another speak first, they stood silent for a while; at last the Ice was broken by one, others followed, but hardly any two agreed; and all that the Duke could gather out of their several answers, was that our Rule of Faith, was Scripture as each one understood it, and *Protestancy* nothing but Scripture, as Interpreted by the Parliament and Church of *England*: Whereupon he concluded, We are these hundred Years very busie for to settle Religion, and for ought I perceive, we are as unsettled now as at the beginning: And truly he had great reason, for Religion and Faith is nothing else, but that sense of Scripture, which each person of sound Judgment understands; and as it's impossible we should all jump and agree in one sense and meaning of the Text, so it's impossible we shall ever be settled and agree in Religion.

Isaac. The reason of our unsettlement hitherto; and at present, is the violent efforts, what by Persecutions, Acts of Parliaments, and other Oppressions; what by Invectives, Intrigues, and Cabals of the Church of *England*, to draw all to be *Protestants*; of the *Presbyterians*, to make us deny Episcopacy; and of each other Congregation, to force us to their respective Tenets: And whilst this constraint and severity is used against Mens Consciences, it's in vain to expect peace or settlement in our Reformed Church: But let us follow the Rule of Faith, let each one believe as in his Conscience he best understands Scripture: let us all believe what we please, and be permitted so to do, and we shall without doubt enjoy perfect Peace and Tranquillity: Believe you *Figurative Presence*,

if you will ; let the *Lutheran* believe his *Real Presence*, if he likes it, and let me believe *no Presence* at all, if I judge there's none ; why will not you permit me to follow that Rule of Faith, which the whole Reformation, even the Church of *England* gives me in her 39 Articles, *Scripture as each person of sound Judgment understands it.* To say, we can never have settlement in Religion, whilst this arbitrary Interpretation of Scripture is permitted, is to speak like a *Papist* : This the Pope and *Papists* said to our first blessed Reformers, and the *Popish Church* says this day to us, that we ought to submit our judgments to the Church and Councils ; that we ought not to believe what sense we think to be true, but what the Pope and Councils propose unto us ; and if *Luther*, and our other Reformers did not do ill in following their own sense and Interpretation of Scripture against all the World, why do you blame me or any other for following their example ?

Ismael. When you speak of our Reformation and Congregations, I hear you reckon the *Arians*, *Socinians*, and *Antitrinitarians*, among them ; sure you do not believe they, or such like ancient condemned Hereticks were of the Reformation ; for we Protestants do believe the Mystery of the Trinity against them, and will never own them to be our Brethren.

Isaac. And do not you believe Episcopacy against the *Presbyterians*, some Canonical Books against the *Lutherans*, Supremacy against the *Quakers*, and Infants Baptism against the *Anabaptists* ; and yet you own them as your Brethren and godly Congregations of the Reformation ; or if you will deny them, they will also scorn you, and say they are more of the Reformation than you are ; and why will you not own the *Arians*, &c. as your Brethren, tho' you believe the Trinity against them ? You say they are *Old condemn'd*
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Hereticks ; and does this language become a Child of the Reformed Church ? By whom were they condemn'd ? Was it not by the Popish Church, which also condemns us, and says we are as much *Hereticks* as they ; and as we ought not to be so called, and judge the Pope and Councils Sentence against us, to be bold, uncharitable, and unjust ; so we must say of the *Arians*, *Pelagians*, and others condemn'd by them. You say Protestants will never own them to be their Brethren ; God forbid the Protestant Church should be so uncharitable to their fellow Christians, and so unjust to themselves. *B. Morton*, (as I cited in my first Dialogue,) as learned a Man as the Church of England bred, says the *Arian* Church is a true Church, and will say no less of the others : But what need we the Testimony of any, for what reason so convincingly proves ; They who walk by one and the same Rule of Faith, are of one and the same Religion ; therefore *Lutherans*, *Protestants*, *Presbyterians* and *Independants*, do esteem themselves to be of the same Faith and Religion, because they all have the same Rule, which is Scripture, as each Congregation understands it : Also, notwithstanding the difference and variety of Congregations in *Popery*, they hold all but one Faith, as they say ; because they have all but one Rule of their Belief, which is their infallible Pope and Church : But it's evident that those which you call *Ancient condemned Hereticks*, have one and the same Rule of Faith with our Reformation ; for ours is Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment understands it, without any obligation of holding the sense of it delivered by Pope, Church, Councils, or any other ; therefore our first blessed Reformers did not care what sense of it the Church or Pope did hold, when they began to Preach the purity of the Gospel, but each of them Interpreted it as he thought fit in the Lord, and so purged the Church of many Errors : This is the very

self-same Rule of Faith, which *Arians, Pelagians, Nestorians*, and others, peremptorily condemned by *Rome* as Hereticks, did follow and walk by: Each of them Read and Interpreted Scripture, Preached and Believed what sense of it they thought to be true, tho' they knew it was against the Doctrine of the Church, looking on Scripture alone as their Rule of Faith, without any regard of the Pope, Church, Councils, or Fathers: The Church of *Rome*, proud and impatient of any Opposition, condemned them as Hereticks for not submitting their Judgments to her; for taking Scripture as they understood it, and not as the Church and Councils understood it, for their Rule of Faith; and if this be a crime, we are as guilty as they; we are equally nocent or innocent; we are both Hereticks, or none is; we are therefore concern'd in their Honour, and ought to defend the integrity of their procedure against the common Enemy, which is the Pope. They were *Reformers* of the Church in their times, as we are in ours; and whereas they have the same Rule of Faith, so they have the same Religion with the Reformation.

Ismael. Then you will say, *Arianism* is the Doctrine of the Reformation, and we may lawfully believe it.

Isaac. I say, God's Unity in Nature and Trinity in persons, is the Doctrine of the Reformation, because the *Protestant, Lutheran, and Hugonot* Church, judge by Scripture, it is true; and if you judge also by Scripture, it is the true Doctrine, you may believe it: I say also, if you judge by Scripture, this Mystery is not true, you may safely deny it, according to the Principles of the Reformation, and be still as good a member of the Reformed Church, as they who believe it; for whoever believes what he judges by Scripture to be true, is a true Reformed: And, that the denial of the Trinity is as much the Doctrine of the Reformation

on, as the belief of it; it appears not only because it was the Doctrine of the *Arians*, who, as I proved, are truly of the Reformed Church; but because it was taught by the greatest Lights of our Church: *d Calvin* says the Text, *My Father is greater than I*, must be understood of Christ, not only as he is Man, but also as he is God. And that the Council of Nice did abuse the Text: *e My Father and I are one*, for to prove the Unity of both in Nature; whereas it only signifies their Unity by conformity of Wills. Again he says, Epist. 2. ad Polon. in Tract. Theol. pag. 796. That Prayer, *Holy Trinity one God have mercy of us*, is barbarous, and does not please me. And adds, *f The Son has his own substance distinct from the Father*. His Disciple *Danax*, says, it's a foolish insipid Prayer: And our great Apostle *Luther*, (who as *Fox* witnesseth, was the Chariot and conductor of *Israel*, and a Man extraordinarily raised and replenish'd with Gods Spirit, to teach the purity of the Gospel,) caused that Prayer to be blotted out of the Litanies. *h That word Trinity*, says he, *sounds coldly; my Soul hates that word* Humousson, and the Arian did well in not admitting it. Lastly, *Ochinus* that great Oracle of England, impugns this Mystery with a strong discourse: *i We are not obliged to believe*, says he, *more than the Saints of the Ancient Testament*, otherwise our condition would be worse than theirs, but they were not obliged to believe this Mystery, therefore we are not obliged. Examine, I pray, the Works of these eminent Doctors, where I quote them; consider if they be not, not only Men of sound judgment, but men extraordinarily raised by God, (says the Synod of *Charonton*;) the Chariots and Conductors of *Israel*, says

Fox;

d In Harm. in Matth. c. 26. vers. 64. & in admonad Polon. in Tract. Theolog. pag. 794. e Comment. super Jo. n. c. 10. f In Act. Seruetti pag. 87. g l. cont. cenebrat. h In Postil. Major. in enarrat. Evang. Domin. Trinit. i Lib. 2. Dial. 2.

Fox: Men to be reverenc'd after Christ; says our Doctor *Powel*, and Apostolical Oracles sent to teach us the purity of the Gospel, and conclude it's an undeniable Verity that this is the Doctrine of the Reformation, whereas it's Scripture as Interpreted by such Men: Oh! But *England*, *France*, and *Scotland*, believes this Mystery; well? And what then? That proves that the Mystery is also the Doctrine of the Reformation, because whatever any Man of sound judgment thinks to be Scripture, it's the Doctrine; but is *England* or *France* alone the whole Reformation? Are not *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Danaus*, *Ochinus*, as well of the Reformation, and Men of as sound Judgment as they? Since therefore they understand by Scripture there's no Trinity, it's the Doctrine of the Reformation also that there's none; Believe it or deny it, which you like best, and you'll be still of the Reformed Church.

Ismael. By the principle you run upon you may say any blasphemy is the Doctrine of the Reformation, for there's hardly any so execrable, but some Dr. of ours has delivered and taught it.

Isaac. The Principle I run upon is this, Scripture as each person of sound Judgment interprets it, is our Rule of Faith: Judge you, if that be not a good Principle in our Reformed Church, whereas this is the Rule of Faith given us by the 39 Articles, and generally by all our Doctors, as I proved in my first Dialogue: this being our Rule of Faith and Reformed Doctrine, it's evident, that whatever Doctrine is judged by any person of sound Judgment to be contained in Scripture, is the Doctrine of our Reformation: some persons of sound Judgment say the *Real Presence* is expressed by Scripture, this therefore is the Doctrine of the Reformation; others say, only *Figurative Presence* is taught in Scripture, this also is the Doctrine of the Reformation; some understand by Scripture, there is a Mystery.

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of the Blessed Trinity ; this therefore is the Doctrine of the Reformation, others understand there's no such Mystery, this also is the Doctrine of the Reformation : so that whether you believe or deny this or any other Tenet controverted, you'll still hold the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Ismael. Calvin *k* says, Christ pray'd unadvisedly, the Eve of his passion ; that he uttered words whereof he was afterward sorry : that in his passion he was so troubled of all sides, that overwhelm'd with desperation, he desisted from invoking God, which was to renounce all hopes of Salvation : And says he, I if you object it's absurd and scandalous to affirm Christ despaired, I answer, this desperation proceeded from him as he was man, not as he was God. And this is not only the Doctrine of Calvin, but of Brentius, *m* Marlotus, *n* Jacobus Minister (quoted by *Bilsen*) and of *Beza*. Will you say this is the Doctrine of the Reformation, or that we can without scruple believe it ? Also Calvin says, *o* That Christ's corporal death was not sufficient for to redeem us, but that after having despaired on the Cross, he suffered the death of his Soul ; that's to say, that his Soul after his corporal death, suffered the pains of the damn'd in Hell. And says he in the same place, they are but ignorant, doltish, brutish men, who will deny it. Luther also teaches the same Doctrine : *p* As he suffered with exceeding pains ; the death of the body, so it seems he suffered afterward the death of the Soul in Hell : *Epinus* *q* a learned Lutheran says, Christ descended into Hell for thee, and suffered not only corporal death, but the death and fire of Hell. Mr. Fulk and Perkins avow this is also the express doctrine of *Illiricus*, *Latimer* and

k Harm. in Evang. Mat. c. 26. vers. 39. and c. 27. vers. 46. & lib. 2. Instit. c. 16. sect. 10. & 11. I In Luc. par. 2. hom. 65. and In Ioan. hom. 54. *m* In March c. 16. *n* In Recogn. pag. 376. *o* Lib. 2. Inst. c. 16. sect. 10. and seq. *p* To. 3. Weitemp. in sp. 16. *q* In ps. 16.

and *Lessius*. Also *Luther* r most impiously affirms, that not only the humane nature of *Christ* dyed for us, but also his Divine nature: see *Luther's* words quoted at large by *Zuinglius*, s and *Hospinian*; r If you say such scandalous blasphemies may be safely believed, you will render your Christianity suspected; and if you say, that they are the Doctrine of the Reformation, or that they may be believed according to the Principles of the Reformation, you will make the Reformation and its Principles to be hated by any good Christian.

Isaac. If I walk by the Rule of Faith of the Reformation, I'll prove my self a true Reformed Child; and if I prove my self to be a Reformed Child, my Christianity cannot be justly suspected. What Tenet have you related of all those which you call blasphemies and scandals, but has been judged by those eminent Doctors of our Reformation to be expresse Scripture, or conformable to Scripture; and since our Rule of Faith is Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment understands it, and since the Doctrine of our Reformation is but whatever any such person of sound Judgment, judges to be expressed in, or proved by Scripture, it's evident that all those Tenets are undeniably the Doctrine of the Reformation: I say then, and will say, without any offence to my Christianity, or blemish to our Reformed Church, that those Tenets are the Doctrine of the Reformation, and may be as safely believed by any Child of it, as Figurative Presence, Supremacy, or two Sacraments: and let not any *Bigot* pretend to frighten me from this Doctrine by calling it *Blasphemy* and *Impiety*; No, it's Scripture, as interpreted by our renowned Reformed Doctors, therefore it's no Blasphemy: Let any man convince me, that our Rule of Faith must not be Scripture, as each person of sound Judgment understands

r In *Confes. majori de Cœna Dui.* f To. 2. in respon. ad *Confes. Luth. fol. 458.* t In *Histor. Sacram. par. 2. fol. 57.*

stands it; and he will convince that this cannot be justly called the Doctrine of the Reformation; but whilst that Principle and Rule of Faith stands unshaken, nothing that is taught by any person of sound Judgment to be the Doctrine of Scripture, but is to be called our Doctrine, and may be safely believed.

You say that whoever has any love for Christianity, will hate the Reformation and its Principles, if they give Liberty for to believe such Blasphemies: But, can any Mother be more Indulgent to her Child, than the Reformation is to us? Such as think those Tenets to be Blasphemies, the Reformation gives them leave not to believe them; and if any judges, by Scripture, that they are not Blasphemies, but pure Doctrine, as *Luther*, *Calvin*, and others did, they have Liberty for to believe them. He who denies them, cannot in Charity check them who believe them, nor can they who believe them, check those who deny them, whereas each follow the Rule of Faith, and believe what they judge by Scripture to be true. And if you or your Church of *England* cry out *Blasphemy*, *Blasphemy*, against all that you judge to be false, why do not you cry *Blasphemy* against *Presbyterians*, *Lutherans*, and other Congregations from whom you dissent? And what difference betwixt you and the Church of *Rome*? The folly of this is to call Heresie and Blasphemy all that is not her own Doctrine: And all that your Church of *England* dislikes, must be *Fanaticism*, *Blasphemy*, and impiety? Must our Rule of Faith be Scripture, as the Church of *England* understands it, and not otherwise? *Presbyterians*, and *Lutherans*, will never allow it: If therefore our Rule of Faith be Scripture, as each person understands it; any person of sound Judgment in the Reformation, may without scruple believe what he understands to be the Doctrine of Scripture.

Fourth Dialogue.

I S M A E L. You still insist upon that principle that our Rule of Faith is Scripture, as each person of sound judgment understands it, and from that principle will follow many absurd consequences destructive of Piety and Religion.

Isaac. That principle is not invented by me, it's of our Holy Reformation; if I did discourse with a *Papist* I would prove the principle to be true, and Gods express Word; but since I discourse with a Reformed Child, I suppose, and not spend my time in proving it: This principle then, being an unquestionable truth in our Reformation, no Reformed Child must be so irreverent and bold as to say, that any Doctrine which clearly and unavoidably follows out of it, is Blasphemous or Impious, for that would be to condemn our principle by which we walk: *Ex vero non sequitur nisi veram*: From a true principle nothing can follow but true Doctrine: Can you deny but this was the Rule of Faith, and principle of our first blessed Reformers, and of the Church of *England*, mentioned in her 39 Articles? If therefore they judged, and if any other judges by that Rule and principle, that those Tenets which you call Impious and Blasphemous, be true Doctrine, they cannot be blamed for believing them.

Ismael. I confess our first Reformers did speak so, but I say such Errors and Impious Doctrines cannot without Irreverence be called the Doctrine of the Re-
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formation, and cannot without impiety be believed, because our Reformation at present condemns and detests those Blasphemies, for we must grant that our Reformation in its beginning was not in its full perfection of Doctrine; God began it by *Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius*, and others: Those great Men had their frailties, they did overlash in some things, and what they said amiss, Gods Heavenly Spirit inspired to the Church from time to time to correct it, and has at length brought our Church to that purity of Doctrine, and fulness of perfection which now it enjoys. Nothing is to be called now the Doctrine of the Reformation, but what is now believed by our Congregations, and none of them believes those execrable Tenets you related.

Isaac. You wrong the Reformation very much, in saying it had not its full perfection in the beginning, it's rather to be thought, that that polishing and refining of it in ensuing Years with new perfections, and correcting the first draught of it by our first Reformers, has been a corruption of it with some mixture of Popish errors and superstitions: For all Religious Congregations, and pretenders to Piety, are at the first beginning in the height of their perfection, and in Progress of Years, they decline and decay from their primitive Spirit into errors and corruption of manners: Religious Congregations are not like *Arts and Sciences*, which by time and experience receive new perfections; but like Chimnies, which grow daily blacker by continual smoke and fire: Witness the *Jewish Church and Law*, in its beginning, flourishing and Holy, but corrupted in progress of time, by Traditions of Men and Superstitions of Pharisees: Witness also the *Law of the Gospel* in those happy times of the Apostles, holy and pure, but corrupted after some Years by errors of *Papery*: If we be to seek for the pure and Orthodox Doctrine of the primitive Church, ought not

we to be said by the Apostles, Men raised extraordinarily by God, and replenish'd with his spirit to teach us the Gospel? And if we be to seek for the pure and Orthodox Doctrine of the Reformation, ought not we to be said rather by *Luther, Calvin, Melancton, Zuinglius, Beza*, and our other first Reformers, than by a few Ministers and Bishops of *England*, who, tho' they be Wise and Pious Men, yet they are not of that stamp as the others. And if our present Congregations presume to correct them, and say they overlash'd in their Doctrine; will not the *Papists* say, if they have been such scandalous Masters and false Teachers, why did you receive their Reformation? And as they erred so grossly in such prime Articles of Christianity, why do not you fear and suspect they have also erred in the rest? Secondly, the *Papists* will say, if as they Reformed us, you Reform them, then you must expect and permit that others may Reform you, and forsake your Doctrine as you forsake theirs.

Ismael. I wish you could make out, that the Reformation was in its full perfection in its beginning; had you read some Writers of ours, perhaps you would judge otherwise; a *Musculus*, a learned *Lutheran*, writes thus; Thus it is with us at present, that if any be desirous to see a great Rabble of Knaves, turbulent Spirits, deceitful persons, Cousenars and Debauch'd Men, let him go to a City where the Gospel is purely Preached, and he shall find them by multitudes; for it's more manifest than the day light, that never were there more unbridled and unruly people among the Turks and Infidels than the professors of the Reformed Gospel. b *Luther* himself says as much; The World grows daily worse, and Men are now more covetous, revengeful, and licentious than they were in Popery. Mr. *Stubs*

c says,

a *Dom. 1. Adventus, & lib. de Proph. Christi.* b *In Posthil. super Evangel. Domi. 1. Advent. & Dom. 26. post. Trinit.*

c says no less; *After my Travels round about all England*, I found the people in most parts proud, malicious, ambitious, and careless of good Works; Mr. Richard Gefery, in his Sermon at St. Pauls Cross, printed Anno 1604. I may freely speak what I have plainly seen, that in Flanders never was there more Drunkenness, in Italy more Wantonness, in Jury more Hypocrisie, in Turkey more Impiety, in Tartary more Iniquity, than is practic'd generally in England, and particularly in London. Certainly our Reformation at present deserves a better Character; never did the Ale-houses and Taverns complain more heavily of want of Trading, which is a proof of our sobriety; the Churches which we see a building in London, is a good Testimony of Piety; and we are so far from any smack of Hypocrisie, that you shall not see in all London the least appearance of Vertue, so hiddenly it's kept from mortal Eyes, but what you may meet in our honest Quakers.

Isaac. I confess our Congregations as now they are, are very good both in Doctrine and manners; but I say also, that the Doctrine and manners of our Reformation, as its first beginning was as Pure as Holy, and as True as now it is, or ever it will be. Nay, supposing and granted, their manners and Doctrine were so corrupt as those Doctors mention; I say that amidst all those Vices, their Life was as Holy, Innocent, Blameless and Pure as yours is now: And that you may be convinc'd of this Truth, know that Calvin expressly teaches. *d We believe, the Sins of the Faithful*, (he means of the Reformation) are but venial Sins; not but that they deserve Death, but because there is no Damnation for the Children of Grace, inasmuch as their Sins are not imputed to them; And again e he says, *We can assure our selves, we can no*

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c *Motives to good Works in the Epist. Dedic.* d *Lib. 3. Inst.*
e. 4. sect. 28. e *Lib. 4. Inst. c. 7. sect. 2.*

more be damn'd for any Sins, than Jesus Christ himself. Luther f is of the same Opinion, as nothing but Faith doth Justifie us, so nothing but Incredulity is a Sin. Again, g No Sin is so great that it can condemn a Man, such as are damn'd, are damn'd only for their Incredulity. Whitaker, h No Sin can hurt a Man who has Faith. The same is taught by Wotton, Fulk, Tindal, and Beza. It's therefore the Doctrine of Scripture, as Interpreted by these Persons of great and sound Judgment, that Incests, Murthers, Intemperance, or whatever else you call a Sin, (Incredulity excepted,) either is no Sin at all, or but Venial Sins, which do no harm, nor cannot damn the children of the Reformation; if therefore our Brethren lived in the beginning of the Reformation, as these Authors relate, they lived according to Scripture, as Interpreted to them by Men of sound Judgment, and this being our rule of Faith and Manners, they did not ill, but very well in following it.

Ismael. They were men of the Reformation, it's true, who taught these Errors, and dissolution of Life and good manners; insomuch, they swerved from the Spirits Holiness and Purity of the Reformation, and must not be believed nor commended. Look upon the Reformation as now it is, and you will not find any such scandalous Doctrine, or corruption of manners.

Isaac. They were not only Men of the Reformation, but the greatest Oracles of it, which you will not match with any of our present Congregations, and it's not pardonable in any Reformed Child to say, such Oracles, Extraordinarily raised by God to Teach the purity of the Gospel, should have taught either Errors in Doctrine, or dissolution of manners: They taught

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f *In locis commun. classe 5. c. 27.* g *To. 2. Wittemb. de capt. Babyl. fol. 74.* h *De Eccl. cont. Bellarm. conf. 2. quæst. 5.*

what in their Conscience they understood by Scripture to be true ; if you will not be so irreverent as to say that they were Knaves, who spoke and taught against their Conscience and Knowledge. Therefore they taught the Doctrine of the Reformation purely and truly : The consequence is evident : For, what is the Doctrine of the Reformation, but what Wise learned Men of sound Judgment, think and understand by Scripture to be true ? Why is figurative Presence the Doctrine of the Reformation ? tho denied by Lutherans, (who are Reformed also,) but because Wise learned Men Judge by Scripture as they understand it, it's the true Doctrine ? or can you give me any other Rule of Faith by which we may know what Doctrine is of the Reformation, and what not, but Scripture as each Person of sound Judgment understands it ? Or what Rule can you give for to know what is good or evil to be done, but Scripture as understood by such Persons ? If therefore Luther, Calvin, and the other Doctors, I quoted, Judge by Scripture that Doctrine and manner of Life to be true and good, why may not we say it's the Doctrine of the Reformation : If you or the Church of England, or Scotland Judge that Doctrine to be false, and that manner of Life to be a dissolution and corruption of manners : Why ? you are Men of sound Judgment, you understand Scripture so ; that will be the Doctrine also is of the Reformation, you may believe it : But you must not deny that Luther and Calvins Doctrine also is of the Reformation, because they were Men of as sound Judgment as you :

You transgress haniously against modesty, in saying those sacred Organs of God swerved from the Spirit and Holiness of the Reformation ; which having no other Rule of Faith but Scripture, as each Person of sound Judgment understands it ; its Spirit and Holiness consist in framing our Life and Doctrine to that Rule, as our blessed Reformers and Reformation in its begin-

ning did, believing those Tenets, which you call Errors and Blasphemy, and living that Life which you call Dissolution and Corruption of Manners, because they Judge by Scripture, as they understood it, that Doctrine and Manner of Life was True, Innocent, and Good; and if you like it as they did, you may believe and live as they did, and be a good Child of the Reformation: Consider I pray all the Works and Doctrine of *Luther*, (the like I say of our other first Reformers,) the three parts of his Doctrine is against *Popery*, and they say, all are Heresies and Blasphemies; the rest is contrary to the Church of *England*, and She says, this is also Errors and Blasphemy, so you conspire with the *Papists*, to destroy the credit of our first and best Reformer; and betwixt you both, you unplume him of all his Feathers, and leave him not a bit of good Doctrine.

But I will stand to the Spirit, and Principles of the Reformation, and Congregations, as now they are, since that you do so much boast of its Purity and great Perfections; and I will prove that Doctrine, and manner of Life, may be believed and followed Lawfully standing to its Principles: For if the Spirit of the Reformation be at present among us, we must not be forced, as in *Popery*, to believe against our proper Judgments, what others believe by Scripture to be true and Holy, but what each one thinks in his own Conscience to be such; because even now at present, our Rule of Faith, is Scripture as each Person of sound Judgment understands it, and this is the same Rule which *Luther* and the Reformation in its beginning had: This Holy liberty is the best Jewel, the greatest Perfection, and most Glorious Prerogative the Reformation has: If therefore now at present any Man Judges by Scripture, that he can Marry ten Wives at a time; that he can kill his own Son as *Abraham* intended; that he may commit Incest with his own Daughter, as *Lot* did; that there

there is no Sin but Incredulity, as *Luther* believed ; nor any Mystery of the Trinity of Persons in one Nature, as *Calvin* believed : With what Justice can the Church of *England* say a Man does not believe, and live as becometh a Reformed Child, or that his Doctrine and Life is scandalous ? Whereas he lives and believes as he understands by Scripture, he may or ought to do, which is the Rule of Faith of the Reformation, even of the Church of *England* ? The Church of *England* says, the *Lutheran* Doctrine of the *Real Presence* is not the Doctrine of Scripture ; that the *Presbyterian* Doctrine against Episcopacy, is not the Doctrine of Scripture ; that the *Anabaptist* Doctrine against Infants Baptism, is not of Scripture ; and yet you permit them all to live in Peace ; you Confess they are true Children of the Reformation, tho *Dissenters* from you ; why ? Because they follow Scripture as they understand it, and this is our Rule of Faith ? And why will not you say, the Belief and Life of that other Man is also of the Reformation, tho absurd it may seem to you ; since he believes and lives as he Judges by Scripture he may ? It follows therefore plainly, that this is the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Iſmael. I confess our Rule of Faith in the Reformation, is Scripture as each person of sound Judgment understands it : but you cannot doubt but that it's needful to moderate and curb this liberty, or it may run too far : for if every man be licenc'd to believe and teach every thing he fancies to be according to Scripture ; as there is no Doctrine so execrable but some ignorant Reader may hit upon a text, which, ill understood may seem to favour it ; so there will be none but may be believed, and called the Doctrine of the Reformation : for example, *Bera* i teaches, (and says it's also the Doctrine of *Calvin*, *Sumaize* and *Geneve*,) that the Lords Supper may be lawfully ad-
i *Epist.* 2. 2. *G.* 25.
[minister'd

minister'd in any kind of Victuals as well as in Bread and Wine, in Eggs, Flesh, Fish, &c. *Where there is no bread and wine*, says he, *we may duly celebrate, if instead of them we use what we usually eat and drink.* And again in the same place; *If there be no water at hand, and that Baptism cannot be with edification differd I would Baptize in any other liquor.*

Isaac. And why should not it be lawful to any Reformed to believe this, whereas it's Scripture as interpreted by a man of so sound a Judgment? but I do not in any wise like that opinion of yours and of the Church of England, that its convenient to limit and curb mens Judgments lest they may run too far: this is the Policy of Rome, They will not permit an arbitrary Interpretation of Scripture, alledging, forsooth, for inconveniency, the multitude of absurd Doctrines which the World would swarm with, if such a liberty were allowed: No, no, far be it from any true Reformed Child to mislike or blame that all people should interpret Scripture, and believe what they judge by it to be true: and if what they judge to be true, should seem to you false and scandalous, do not you believe it, but let them believe it, and they will be of the Reformation, because they follow our Rule of Faith.

Ismael. k Luther, l Melancthon, m Musculus, n Ochinus, o Beza, and others, teach the lawfulness of Bigamy or multiplicity of Wives, and prove it with the example of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: and Ochinus expounding the Text of St. Paul, *It becometh a Bishop to be a man of one Wife*: The prohibition, says he, is not to be understood so, that a Bishop should have but one Wife at a time, for certainly he may have many, but S. Paul's meaning is, that he ought not to have too many Wives at a time, that's to say ten or twenty.

Isaac. k To. 5. Wittem. serm. de Matrim. & in 1. ad Corint. 7. l Consil. Theol. par. 1. pag. 648. & 134. m In Epist. Paul. ad Phil. & in 2. ad Tim. 3. n lib. 2. Dial. 21. o Lib. de Repud. & Divort. pag. 223.

Isaac. And will you deny this to be the Doctrine of the Reformation, whereas it's Scripture as Interpreted by men of so eminent and sound a judgement?

Ismael. The Synod of *Geneve*, *p* and the *q* Ecclesiastical Discipline of *France*, printed at *Saumur*, has decreed, that a Wife whose Husband is a long time absent, may have him call'd by the publick Cryer, and if within a competent time he does not appear, without any further enquiry, the Ministers may licence her to marry any other, or marry her himself.

Isaac. I say, all honest Women may practise this Doctrine without scruple or shame, whereas it's Scripture as Interpreted by that thrice holy Synod; but let Seamen beware how they undertake long voyages, for fear their Wives may take other Husbands in their absence.

Ismael. *Luther* teaches it's lawful to a Wife, if her Husband does not please her, to call her Man servant, or her neighbour; which Doctrine they say is come to the ears of our *London* Sisters; and he gives the like liberty to the Husbands, if their Wives be pettish and humoursome. If the Husband, says he, cannot correct the humoursomness of his Wife, he may imagine she is dead, and may marry another, because it's not in the power of a Man to live without a Woman, nor in hers to live without a Man.

Isaac. This is Scripture as Interpreted by *Luther*, and consequently must not be denied to be the Doctrine of the Reformation; nor can any of our Reformation be justly punish'd or blam'd for practising it, if he judges by Scripture it be true, (as *Luther* did) for this is our Rule of Faith. But *Luther* never gave this liberty, but upon condition, that the Husband or Wife should first make their complaint before a Magistrate, for to have a redress of their injury and discontent; but this

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p Canon. Generales Genuen 1560. *q* Chap. 13. art. 31.
r To. 5. Wittem. serm. de Matrim.

condition seems too combersome to the modesty of our Sisters; they do not submit to it, but do themselves justice without any address to the Magistrate. I know also that not only *Luther*, but *f Bucer*, *t Melancton*, *u Ochinus*, *x Musculus* and *Calvin*, *y* do teach that a man who finds his Wife in Adultery, may cast her off by Divorce, and marry another; and our *French Synods* have ordered this Doctrine to be put in their Ecclesiastical Discipline, so that it's the Doctrine of Scripture, as interpreted by these persons of sound judgment, and consequently of the Reformation: you may therefore believe and practice it; our Sisters, particularly our Ministers Wives were much alarm'd at this Doctrine, and say it's a damnable Heresie; believe as you please.

Ismael. Does not *Luther* say it's impossible a young Man of 20 years can live without a Woman; or a young Maid of 18 years, without a Man; whereby all Parents may believe their Daughters of that age are defiled, if not preserv'd in due time: sure you will not say this is the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Isaac. And who doubts but that it's the Reformed Doctrine: Scripture as interpreted by so sound a judgment; the contrary Doctrine is also of the Reformation, and you may believe it, because our Glorious Queen *Elizabeth* dyed a Virgin; and it's credibly reported some few fellows of *Oxford* and *Cambridge* live continently.

Ismael. But what do you think of a Child Christen'd in Popery by a Monk or a Fryar, ought he to be Christen'd again in our Reformation? And what if a Popish Priest, or Fryar, did become of our Reformed Church, can he lawfully Marry whereas, he made a Vow of Chastity?

Isaac.

f To. 5. Wittemb. serm. de Matrim. t In Scriptis Anglic. de Reg. Chr. l. 2. c. 26. & in Matth. c. 19. u In Consil. Theol. par. 1. pag. 648. f & 134. x Dial. 200. & 204. in Epist. S. Paul. ad Tim. 3. y l. 4. Inst. c. 19. sect. 37. Discip. Eccl. c. 13. z Sermon. de Matrim.

Isaac. As to the first *Query*, it's the Doctrine of the Reformation, declared by many *French Synods*, and recorded in their Ecclesiastical Discipline, that he must be Christen'd again, because the first Baptism was Null: it's also the Doctrine of the Reformation, declared by the Church of *England*, and many Synods of *France*, that the first Baptism is sufficient and valid: believe which you please. It's also the Doctrine of the Reformation, that Infants Baptism is not at all needful (nay nor Lawful say the *Anabaptists*) so says *Calvin*, a *Zuinglius*, *Beza* and many others, it's likewise the Doctrine of our 39. Articles, b and our holy Synod of *London* c that Infants baptism is lawful and needful. Believe which you like best; both are of the Reformation.

As to the second *Query*, it's the Doctrine of the Reformation that Priests and Fryars are obliged to the vow of Chastity which they made in Popery, and cannot marry, this is the Doctrine of many of our Brethren and particularly of d *Hooker*, e *Marloratus*, *Budellus* and f *Cowel*, who say the Papish vows of Poverty, Obedience and Chastity are commendable and ought to be kept. You may also believe this is wicked Doctrine, and that they may take Wives notwithstanding their vow of Chastity, as well as Benefices notwithstanding their vow of Poverty: believe which you please, both Doctrines are of the Reformation; but the best is to say they can marry, for if marriage and benefices were denied them, no Priest or Fryar would ever embrace our Reformed Doctrine: We know our great *Zuinglius* himself would not at all preach the Gospel unto the *Suitzers*, until that he presented a petition for himself and his companions, (all Priests and Fryars) extant yet in his 1 *Tom.* pag. 110. and

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obtain-

a *Lib. 4. Inst. c. 15. sect. 20. & 21.* b *Ast. 27.* c *Can. 29.* d *Lib. 2. Eccles. Polit. pag. 103.* e *In Tim. c. 50.* f *In defens. Hookeri art. 8.*

obtained the contents of it, which was to have Wives. Nor can we doubt this to be the best Doctrine, whereas *Luther*, *Beza*, and almost all our other Reformers, were Priests and Fryars, and the first step they gave in the Reformation was to Marry: the Papists and some weak Brethren were much scandalized at *Luthers* marriage, and *Erasmus* his rallerie upon it was much solemnized, *Luther yesterday a Monk, to day a Husband, and next day a Father*, because that honest *Kate Boren*, his virtuous Bride, was happily delivered of a lovely Boy eight days after he married her: but the Servant of God did not regret the action, which proves that he judged by Scripture it was very lawful.

Fifth Dialogue.

I S MAEL. You know I have been born and bred in our holy Reformation, and a Church of *England* man; you tell me I may believe this or that, and whatever I please; I would gladly settle once for ever, and resolve what I may, and ought to believe, and not to be every day carried away with every wind of Doctrine: let me, to that purpose propose unto you, and hear your resolution of some doubts. What do you think, have not we a Church on earth established by Christ, wherein we are to live and serve him, and believe her Doctrine?

Isaac. I will give you no other instruction nor answer but the pure Doctrine of the Reformation, which when you have heard, you may determine as you like best, what Religion to embrace; but know this, that after you have determin'd with your self to believe this or that; you may with a very safe conscience alter that resolution next day after, and believe the quite contrary

trary to what you resolve to believe, if upon better consideration you think the contrary to be true; this is the liberty of the holy Reformation, as I proved in my first Dialogue.

As to your present doubt I answer, it's the Doctrine of the Reformation, that it was Jesus Christ the Son of God who establisht the Church, you may believe it therefore: It's also the Doctrine of the Reformation, that it was not Jesus Christ the Son of God who establisht the Church: that this is the Doctrine of our Reformation its apparent, for it's Scripture as Interpreted by *Ochinus* a man of sound Judgment, *whom all Italy could not match*, says Calvin, *in whose presence England was happy, and unhappy in his absence*, says B. Bale: *Ochinus* speaks thus, *a Considering how the Church was establisht by Christ and washt with his Blood; and considering again how it was utterly overthrown by Papacy; I concluded that he who establisht it, could not be Christ the Son of God, because he wanted providence; and upon this reflection he renounced Christ and became a Jew. And no man can say but that he acted and behaved himself like a true Child of the Reformation in so doing, for he followed Scripture as he understood it; and as he was a true Reformed Child in forsaking Popery, because he understood by Scripture, that the Reformation was better; so since he understood by reading Scripture more, that Judaism was better than the Reformation, he acted like a good Reformed, in chusing that which he understood by Scripture to be the best; this is the Reformations Rule of Faith; do you, if you please, as he did, and you'll be as good a Reformed as he.*

And if you choose to believe that there is a Church establisht on earth by Christ, you must beware never to believe or perswade your self that we are bound to believe her Doctrine, or live in her, if you do not judge by Scripture that she teaches the Doctrine of
a In Prefat. Dialog. F 2 Christ

Christ: This is the most essential point of Popery, an obligation of submitting our judgments to the Church, and believing her Doctrine without any more examining and in this the Church of *England* is much like the Popish Church, which by Acts of Parliaments and other severities, would oblige all men to believe her Doctrine, Rites and Ceremonies: No, God has given us Scripture for our Rule of Faith; as we forsook the Popish Church, because we discovered by Scripture her many Errors in Doctrine; so we are not bound to believe the Doctrine of any other Church, but as we find by Scripture her Doctrine is true. Do, and speak as *Luther* to 1. Edit. *Jen.* in Resolut. *I will be free, and will not submit to the authority of Councils, Popes, Church or University; to the contrary I will confidently teach whatever I Judge to be true; whether it be Catholick Doctrine or Heretical; condemned or approved.*

Ismael. Must I not believe that the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, delivered to his Apostles and the Church is true Doctrine?

Isaac. The Reformation teaches, it is, and you may safely believe it: You may as safely believe it is not, in the Principles of the Reformation; because it teaches that Christ err'd in Doctrine and manners: *Vere Pharisei erant viri valde boni*, says *Luther*; b and *Christus minime, debuit eos taxare*: and *Calvin* says, c *it's a folly to think he was not ignorant in many things*; lastly, *David Georgius* d (a Man of God and of a holy life says *Osiander*) writes, *If the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles had been true and perfect; the Church which they planted had continued, but now it is manifest that Antichrist has subverted it, as it's manifest in Papacy; therefore it was false and imperfect.* See these words quoted in the History of *David George* printed by the Divines of *Basile*, at *Antwerp*, Anno. 1568. both Doctrines

b *Serm. de 50. Artic. in summa. summarum.* c *In Harm. super, Luc. c. 2.* d *Eptitom Gent. 16. par. 2.*

rines are Scripture as interpreted by men of sound Judgment ; a Child of the Reformation, may believe which he will.

Ismael. Is it not the Doctrine of the Reformation that the Apostles were infallible in their Doctrine ? much more must we believe that Jesus Christ was so.

Isaac. Yes it is ; you may believe it : and it's also the Doctrine of the Reformation that they were not infallible, neither in their written or unwritten Doctrine, so, many of our most renowned Doctors speak, and whatever any Men of sound Judgment Judge to be true by Scripture, is the Doctrine of the Reformation: *Zuinglius*, e one of the greatest Oracles of our Church says, *It's a great ignorance to believe any infallible authority in the Gospels or Epistles of the Apostles ; Beza*, not inferiour to *Zuinglius*, blotted out of *S. John* the history of the Woman Adulteress, Judging it a fable. *Clebitius* f affirms, that *Luke's* relation of *Christ's* passion is not true, because it does not agree with that of *Matthew* and *Mark*, and more credit is to be given to two, than to one. *g* *Calvin* says, *Peter* consented to, and added to the schism of the Church, to the overthrow of *Christian* liberty, and *Christ's* Grace. *h* *Whitaker* says, *It's* evident that after the Descent of the Holy Gospel, the whole Church, even the Apostles, erred ; and *Peter* erred in Doctrine and manners. *i* *Luther* says *Peter* lived and taught extra Verbum Dei ; and *Brentius* k his Disciple says, that *Peter* and *Barnabas* together with the Church of *Jerusalem* erred after receiving the Holy Ghost. If our Rule of Faith be Scripture as each person of sound Judgment understands it, undoubtedly this must be the Doctrine of the Reformation, and may be believed by any Reformed, since it's

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Scripture.

i *Tom.* 2. cont. *Catabapt.* fol. 10. *f* *Victoria* verit. arg. 5.

e *In* cap. 2. ad *Gal.* *h* *de Eccles.* cont. *Bellarmin.* Cont. 2. q. 4.

To. 5. *Witten.* an 1554. in *Epist.* ad *Gal.* c. 1. *k* *In* ps 1. *Cof.* c. de *Concil.*

Scripture interpreted by such renowned men.

Ismael This is most wicked Doctrine, I'll never believe it.

Isaac. If you think by Scripture it's wicked, do not: follow your Rule of Faith, Scripture as you understand it; but if any other understands by Scripture (as those authors did) that the Doctrine is good, give him leave to believe it; he'll but follow his Rule of Faith; Scripture as he understands it.

Ismael. I would gladly know which are the true Canonical Books of Scripture.

Isaac. The Reformation teaches and you may believe with the Church of England, that *S. Pauls* Epistle to the Hebrews, those of *James* and *Jude*: the 2. of *S. Peter*; the 2. and 3. of *S. John*, are true Canonical Scripture; the Reformation also teaches they are not Canonical, because *Lutherans* deny them; believe which you like best. But if you'll live in peace, and out of all strife with *Protestants*, *Lutherans*, and others, who dispute, if this or that be Canonical Scripture; your readiest and speediest way will be, to say there's no true Canonical Scripture; Scripture is no more to be regarded than other pious Books: if you say this is not the Doctrine of the Reformation; read *Hossias de expresse Verbo Dei*, & *lib. de Har.* where he relates this to be the Doctrine of the *Swinfeldians*, as good Reformers as the best of us: they say, that we are not to regard any Instruction from man or Book, but Gods immediate inspiration, which speaks secretly to our hearts; for which they alledge those comfortable words of the Prophet, *I will hear what my Lord my God speaks in me*: for say they, the Book which we call Scripture, is a creature, and we must not seek for light and instruction from any creature, but from God the Father of Lights. This is Scripture as interpreted by Men of sound Judgment; any Child of the Reformation may believe it.

Ismael.

Ismael. I thought to settle my mind in my choice of some Religion, and you go the way to beat me from all, for if you renverse the Authority of Scripture, what warrant shall we have for any Religion? God forbid the Reformation should deny the true Canon, or the infallible truth of Scripture; and let all the world say the contrary, I will constantly aver and believe it's Gods infallible word.

Isaac. How can you say I beat you from all Religion, when I directly perswade you to follow the Rule of Faith of our Reformation, *Scripture as each person of sound judgment understands it*; let this be your Religion, if you will be a true Reformed; whatever you judge in your conscience to be true, let the Church of England, or France, or any other, say and believe what they will; you are to believe but what you judge by Scripture to be true; and this is the Religion of the Reformation.

Ismael. I would gladly know, if it be lawful to chop or change Text?

Isaac. It's the Doctrine of the Reformation that you cannot, because God has forbid to add to, or take away from his word: and therefore we condemn the Papists for their *Tradition*, obtruded upon the Flock as the Word of God: It's also the Doctrine of the Reformation, and the practice of our best Reformer, when the Text does not speak clear enough, that for to refute Popery and establish our own Doctrine, we may add or diminish a word or two; which is not to change the Word of God, but to make it speak more expressly: as when *Luther* had a mind to preach *Justification by Faith alone*, finding the Text said but, *Man is Justified by Faith*, he added the word *Alone*, and made the Text very clear against Popery, which formerly was somewhat obscure: *Zuinglius* being to teach the *Figurative presence* of Christ in the Sacrament, found the Text, *this is my Body*, to be too pat against his Doctrine

Doctrin, and instead of *Is*, put in *this signifieth*: The Church of *England* being to preach the Kings Spiritual Supremacy, could not convince the obstinate Papist by the Original Text, which said 1 Pet. 2. *submit your selves unto every humane creature for the Lord's sake, whether it be the King as excelling, or to, &c.* But in King *Edwards* time they altered one word, and made the Text thus, *submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, whether it be to the King, as being the chief head*, and the following impressions of the Bible, the year 1557 and 79. say, *To the King as supreme.* And so the true Doctrin is clearly convinc'd out of Scripture, as also the lawfulness of Priests Marriage; for the Text before the Reformation said 1 Cor. 9. *have not we power to lead about a Woman sister*; and now our Bibles say, *have not we power to lead about a Wife being our Sister*: hence it's evident according to the Doctrin and practice of our Reformation, that when you have a mind to establish a Doctrin which you judge to be true, you may change the Text and make it speak to your sense and meaning, provided you judge your sense to be true.

Ismael. What do you think of *Justifying Faith*? Does *Faith alone* justify us?

Isaac. It's the Doctrin of the Reformation, that without charity it cannot, because *S. Paul* says 1 Cor. 13. *If I have Faith so as to move mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.* It's also the Doctrin of the Reformation, that it is impious and wicked to say, *Faith alone* without Charity does not justify; this is Scripture as interpreted by *Luther* a man of sound judgment: *Who say*, quoth *Luther*, *that Faith alone though perfect it be, cannot Justify without Charity, say impiously and wickedly, because Faith alone, without any good works doth justifie.* Believe which Doctrin you please, both are of the Reformation.

Ismael.

Ismael. Luther was insolent in checking the Doctrine of St. Paul.

Isaac. Probably he did not reflect that it was the Doctrine of the Apostle, and if you will have it to be a Check of S. Paul, Luther m will answer for himself, *Be it,* says he, *that the Church, Augustin or other Doctors, also Peter and Paul, nay, and an Angel from Heaven should teach otherwise than as I teach, yet my Doctrine is such, that it setteth forth Gods Glory; I know I teach no Humane, but Divine Doctrine.*

It's the Doctrine of the Reformation, that Faith alone, without any good Works, and notwithstanding all Sins you are Guilty of, doth justify you: This is Scripture, as Interpreted by *Luther*, who says, nothing can damn you but Incredulity, as nothing but Faith can save you; of *Whitaker, Wotton, Fulk, and Beza*, whose words I related in our precedent Dialogue, which I believe you remember, and I need not repeat.

It's also the Doctrine of the Reformation, that good Works are meritorious of Grace and Glory; n *Hocker* and *Harmonia* confess. o say it's the Doctrine of Scripture; and what any person of sound Judgment judges to be the Doctrine of Scripture, he may believe it, for this is our Rule of Faith. It's likewise the Doctrine generally of all our Church, that good Works are not at all meritorious: *Tindall*, (called by *Fox* a Man of God, and a constant Martyr,) judges this to be so true, that in his Treatise *de Mammona iniquitatis*, he says, *Christ himself did not by all his good Works merit the Glory*: And tho' the Scripture says expressly he did, *Calvin* q affirms, that it's a Foolish curiosity to examine, and a rash proposition to say *Christ did Merit*.

It's the Doctrine of the Reformation, that tho' good Works

m In Epist. ad Gal. c. 1. & 2. & Tom. 5. *Wittemb.* an. 1554. fol. 29. n Lib. 5. de Eccl. Polit. sect. 72. o pag. 495. & 273. p Acts and Mon. pag. 514. q Lib. 2. Inst. c. 17. sect. 6.

Works be not meritorious, nor have not the least influence in our *Justification* or *Salvation*, yet they are absolutely needful for both, inasmuch as that true Faith cannot be without good Works, because they are the marks and signs of a *living Faith*, by which alone we are saved; this is the judgment of the Church of England, expressed in the 11 and 12 Article of the 39, and of *Melancton in locis Commun. de Bonis operibus*, and you may believe it: You may also believe, and it's the Doctrine of the Reformation, that good Works are so far from being needful, that they are prejudicious and hurtful to our Salvation, and the best way to be saved is to do no good work at all; this is Scripture as Interpreted by *Illiricus, Flaccius, Amsdorfius*, quoted in *Act. Colloq. Aldeburg. pag. 205. and 229.* and *Luther* was so deeply perswaded of this truth, tho' that Christ said, *If thou wilt enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, keep the Commandment*: *Luther* says, it's an obstacle to our Salvation to keep them: *Where it is said*, quoth he, *that Faith in Christ doth indeed justify us, but that it is necessary also to keep the Commandments, there Christ is denied, and Faith abolish'd, because that which is proper to Faith alone is attributed to the Commandments.* And again, *he says he, if Faith be accompanied with good Works, it's no true Faith; that it may justify it must be alone without any good Works.* This is Scripture as Interpreted by such Eminent and sound Men; and consequently the Doctrine of the Reformation; and who doubts but that any Doctrine of the Reformation may be believed. Hence forward, when you hear the Preacher exhort you to good Works, you may believe him, if you please, and have a mind to spend your Monies, because he Preaches the Doctrine of the Reformation; or you may laugh at him, and believe not a word he says, because he Preaches against the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Ismael.

1 In comment. in cap. 2. ad Gal. 1 To. 1. Proposit. 3.

Ismaël. These are dangerous and scandalous Tenets, destructive of Piety and Christianity; and let *Luther* and those Authors you quoted, say what they please, the Reformation, nor no Honest Man will ever believe such abominable Doctrine.

Isaac. I do not say that the Children of the Reformation are obliged to believe them: They may believe as you do, that all are wicked Tenets: But if *Luther* and the others cited, judge in their Conscience these Tenets to be the Doctrine of Scripture, and if *Peter*, *John*, or *James*, like their interpretation, I say, they may according to the principles of our Reformation believe them, and be as truly Reformed Children as you; for our Rule of Faith is Scripture as each person of sound judgment understands it, and in believing those Tenets, because they judge them to be the Doctrine of Scripture, they stick fast to, and follow our Rule of Faith: Why is *Figurative Presence*, and the *Kings Supremacy*, the Doctrine of the Reformation; tho' denied by *Papists*, *Lutherans*, and *Presbyterians*? But because the *Protestants* judge it's the Doctrine of Scripture: If therefore those great Authors I quoted, and any other with them judge those Tenets to be the Doctrine of Scripture, they can be justly called the Doctrine of the Reformation: Must *Protestants* be forced against their judgments to deny Real Presence, and Supremacy, because *Lutherans* say it's wicked Doctrine. And why must *Luther*, *Illiricus*, *Flaccius*, and others, be forced to deny those Tenets, tho' *Protestants* or *Papists* Judge them to be damnable? Let each one believe what he thinks to be the Doctrine of Scripture, and he will still be a true Reformed Child.

Ismaël. Does not our Reformation teach that it's possible to all Men, assisted with Gods Grace, to keep the Commandments?

Isaac. This is the Doctrine of the Church of England, and consequently of the Reformation: It's also

also the Doctrine of the Reformation delivered out of Scripture, as Interpreted by *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Willet*, and several others, that it's impossible to any Man assisted with what Grace soever, to keep the Commandments. None has ever yet, says our great *Calvin*; t and God has decreed none shall ever keep the Commandments: Again, u *The Law and Commandments were given us, to no other end, but that we should be damn'd by them; inasmuch, that it is impossible for us to do what they command.* The same Doctrine is taught by *Luther*, in several places of his Works, by *Willet*, z and by our Brethren the *Gomarists* of *Holland*, and many of our French Synods. Believe which you please, both Doctrines are of the Reformation.

It's also the Doctrine of *Luther* and *Calvin*, that God does not cast men into the Hell because their sins deserve it, nor save men because they merit it, but meerly because he will have it so: He crowns those who have not deserved it, says *Luther*, y and he punishes those who have not deserved it; 'tis Gods Wrath and Severity to damn the one, 'tis Gods Grace and Mercy to save the other. *Calvin* also, z Men are damn'd for no other cause, but because God will have it so; he is the cause and Author of their Damnation; their Damnation is decreed by God when they are in their Mothers Womb, because he will have it so; this is also the belief of our *Gomarists* in *Holland*, of many French Churches, and of several learned *Calvinists*; though the Church of England denies this Doctrine, none will dare say it is not the Doctrine of the Reformation, because it is Scripture as Interpreted by such eminent men of our Church.

Ismael. I will never believe such execrable Doctrines, nor will I ever be of any Congregation which believes them.

Isaac.

t *Lib. 2. Instit. c. 7. sect. 5.* u *Harm. Evang. in Luc. c. 10. vers. 26.* x *In Synop. Papismi pag. 564.* y *Lib. de servo. Arbit. cont. Erasmi.* z *Lib. 3. Instit. c. 21. sect. 5. & 7. & c. 22. sect. 11. & cap. 13. sect. 1.*

Isaac. I do not advise you to believe them; but to give others leave to believe them, if they think them to be the Doctrine of Scripture; as *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Willet*, *Gomarists*, and others do: You must not, if you be a true Reformed Child hinder any Man from believing; nor be displeased with him for believing what he Judges in his Conscience to be the Doctrine of Scripture, for this is our Rule of Faith. Will not you be of the Congregation and Religion of those, who follow Scripture as their Rule of Faith, and Believe what they Judge in their Conscience to be the Doctrine of Scripture?

Ismael. Yes I will, and am of such a Congregation, for this is the Rule of Faith of the Reformation.

Isaac. Why then, you must be of the same Congregation with the *Gomarists*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, and the others, who believe those which you call execrable Doctrines, because they follow Scripture as they understand; and believe those Doctrines, because they Judge them to be of Scripture: You both follow the same Rule, one goes one way, and the other another, and both are of the Reformation. The Church of *England* understands by Scripture, that God is not the Author nor cause of Sin, that he does not force us to Sin; who doubts but that this is therefore the Doctrine of the Reformation? But *Calvin*, *Brentius*, *Beza*, and several others understand by Scripture; that God is the cause and Author which forces our Will to Sin; that Man, and the Devil, are but Gods Instruments to commit it: That Murthers, Incests, Blasphemies, &c. are the Works of God, that he makes us commit them: And who doubts but this also is the Doctrine of the Reformation, being Scripture as Interpreted by such eminent and sound Judgment? God, says *Calvin*, (a) directs, moves, inclines and forces the Will of Man to Sin; in so much that the power and efficacy

of Working, is wholly in him; Man, nay, and Satan when he impells us, being only Gods Instruments which he uses for to make us Sin. Zuinglius, Willet, Beza, teach the same.

a Lib. 2. Inst. c. 4. sect. 3. & l. 1. c. 18. sect. 2. & l. 3. c. 23. sect. 4. Lo. 1. de deprovid. c. 6. in Synop]. pag. 563. In manifest. stratag. Papist.

Sixth Dialogue.

I S M A E L. I am weary of hearing such horrid Blasphemies; my Heart trembles to hear you say, that such abominable Tenets may be believed according to our Rule of Faith and Principles of the Reformation: I beseech you let me hear no more of such stuff: I conceive very well that Mens Judgments and Consciencs are not to be constrain'd to believe or deny, this or that Tenet, because the Pope, or his Infalible forsooth, Church, will have it so.

Isaac. And must they be constrain'd to deny or believe, because the fallible Church of England or France, will have it so?

Ismael. No, I do not say they must, have Patience, and hear me speak a while: I say that Scripture must be our Rule of Faith, and not any Pope, or Church, or Congregation; and that we are not to be forced by any to believe, but what we understand to be true by Scripture; and that if we Judge by Scripture, any Doctrine to be false, and contrary to Gods Word, we must not be forced to believe it: But we must

must not abuse this Liberty: That we should have Liberty for to believe or deny Supremacy, Figurative Presence, Communion in one or both kinds, and such other Inferiour Truths controverted among Christians; and that each Congregation may in such Articles, believe as it understands by Scripture to be true, may pass, and it's practic'd in our Reformed Churches; But that we should run so far, as to have Liberty by our Rule of Faith to believe or deny the Fundamental and Chief Articles of Christianity, as the Trinity, Incarnation, Divinity of Christ, &c. That Liberty ought not to be given: Our Reformation very wisely and piously permits the *Lutherans* to believe one thing, the *Presbyterians* another, the *Protestants* another, and so of the rest: And all are true Reformed Children, because each of them believes as they Judge by Scripture to be true: But the Reformation has never given, nor never will give Liberty to Interpret Scripture against the Fundamental Article of Christianity: we must be moderate; and keep our rambling fancies within compass, and if any should Judge and Interpret Scripture in favour of any scandalous and abominable Tenets against Christianity and good Manners, he must be checkt, and not commended. This moderation the Church of *England* uses, and will never permit to the contrary.

Iaac. I perceive a great deal of Popish Blood to run in your veins, and that if you and your Church of *England*, were in power at the beginning of our Reformation, we should never have had a *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, or such other noble and renowned Reformers? By what I gather from your discourse, I do not see the breadth of an Inch's difference betwixt the Church of *Rome*, and you and your Church of *England*, for the Church of *Rome* will not stick to grant, that Gods Word alone is her Rule of Faith, but so that none must believe *any sense* of it, but as she be-

believes it, nor Interpret *any text*, but receive her Interpretation of it. The Church of *England* has Scripture for her Rule of Faith, and gives us Liberty for to Interpret, Understand, and Believe *some text* of it, as each one thinks best; and so permits *Presbyterians* to deny Episcopacy, *Lutherans* to deny Figurative Presence, &c. and confesses they are all her Brethren of the Reformation, but she will give no Liberty at all for to Interpret *other Texts*, but all must understand them as she does, or all must be Hereticks and damn'd Men? No, that Text, *My Father and I are one*, must be Interpreted to signifie the Unity in Nature of the Father and Son, as the Church of *England* believes, none must Interpret it otherwise: So that the difference betwixt the Popish Church and that of *England* is; the first gives us no Liberty at all, the second gives us some Liberty, the first robs us of all; the second but the one half. The Rule of Faith in *Papery* is Scripture, as Interpreted by the Pope and Councils; the Rule of Faith in *England* as to *some Articles*, is Scripture as Interpreted by the Church of *England*; and as to *other Articles*, Scripture as each Person of sound Judgment understands it: And thus *Protestants*, are but half *Papists*, and half Reformed, and both these ingredients will never make a good compound.

Let any unbyass'd and impartial Man Judge if the Church of *England* proceeds justly in this: For if our Rule of Faith be Scripture as each Person of sound Judgment understands it, as she mentions in her 39. Articles; and as the whole Reformation believes, if we are not to be constrained, to believe any Church, Council, or Mans sense of Scripture, if we do not Judge by the Word of God it's true, by what Authority, Rule or Reason, can the Church of *England* give me Liberty to understand and believe *some Texts* as I please, and deny me Liberty for to understand and believe *others*, as I Judge by Scripture they ought to be

be understood? I pray observe well this discourse here are *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Zuinglius*, and our other first Reformers; they Interpret some Texts against the Doctrine of *Rome*, and others against the Doctrine of the Church of *England*. They are praised for the first, and esteemed Apostolical Reformers, because without any regard of what the Church of *Rome* said, they freely taught and believed what they Judged by Scripture to be true; why must not they be praised and esteemed true Reformers also, for not regarding what the Church of *England* or any other says, but teach the impossibility of Gods Commandments, the sufficiency of Faith alone, and all those other Tenets which you so much dislike, since they Judge by Scripture, that to be the true Doctrine. Are they bound to submit their Judgments to the Church of *England*, more than to that of *Rome*?

Ismael. But in those Tenets they do not only contradict the Church of *England*, but all Christian Churches and Congregations; for all will say those are wicked and scandalous Doctrines.

Isaac. And if they Judge by Scripture that those Tenets are not such, but sound and good Doctrine, may not they believe them, tho all the World and ten Worlds did gainsay them? Is not Scripture our Rule of Faith, and are we to regard what any Church or all Churches say, further than we find by Scripture that they say well? But being these Tenets, which you call horrid Blasphemies displease you, I'll change my discourse; and because I see you are Popishly inclin'd, I will shew you how by the Principles of our Reformation, you can be as good a Papist as the Pope; one Principle excepted, wherein you must dissent from the Church of *Rome*, if you intend to remain a true Reformed Child.

Ismael. You promise too much, and more than I desire to know; I don't desire to have any Communi-

cation with the Pope; I know by the Writings of our Authors what kind of Beast he is.

Isaac. By your favour, you may believe the Popes are Worthy, Honest, and Godly Men; many Doct-ors of our Reformation, and our Travellers to the Court of *Rome* give this Testimony of them? You may also believe, that Popes and Cardinals are Knaves and Atheists, who look on Scripture as a *Romance*, and deny the Incarnation of Christ, for *Calvin* says *! so*, and would never have said it, if it had not been true: But beware not to speak so in *Rome*, or they'll lodge you where Honest *Taylor* the *Quaker* was; nor in *Spain*, or they'll stop your Mouth with an Inquisition faggot.

Ismael. I care not what the Pope or Cardinals are; but I would gladly know, what Religion and Congregation you are of; for whereas you are my immediate Instructor, it behoves me to know what Religion you have.

Isaac. As to my Religion, I doubt not but that my Readers will be divided in their Judgments of me; if a Papist reads me, he'll swear I am an Atheist; but I hope he will not pretend to be infallible as his Pope: if a Protestant, he'll say, I am a Papist, and that my drift is to cast dirt upon his Church; the honest *Quaker* will say, I am a profane man, others perhaps will say I am of no Religion, but a Despiser of all, and our Congregation are so uncharitable that likely none will accept of me, because I say all Religions are very good: a sad thing that a man must be hated for speaking well of his Neighbours, and that each one must have all the World to be naught but himself: This then is my Religion, To suffer Persecution for Justice and Truth; to render good for evil, to bless those who curse me, and speak well of all Congregations, whilst they speak all evil against me: reflect well upon what I discoursed hitherto, and you will find, I am as great a Lover of

14. *Inst. c. 7. Sect. 27.*

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the Reformation as they who may think me its enemy ; and read my following discourse, and you will find I love Popery as well as the Reformation : The Spirit of God makes no exception of Persons.

Ismael. You promised to prove by the principles of the Reformation, that we may believe all the Tenets of Popery, and remain still of the Reformation : how can this be ?

Isaac. You remember I excepted one Principle of Popery, wherein you must necessarily dissent from them : and if you deny this one Principle, you may believe all their other Tenets as well as the Pope, and be as good a Child of the Reformation as *Luther*.

Ismael. What Principle is this, which you seem to make the only distinctive sign of a Reformed, from a Papist ?

Isaac. Listen a while : a Papist is not a Papist because he believes Purgatory, Transubstantiation, Indulgences, and the rest of Popish Tenets, but because he believes them upon the Testimony of the Pope and Church, because they assure him they are revealed Truths : If a Papist did say, I believe these Tenets, because I my self do judge by Scripture, that they are revealed, and not because the Pope and Church say they are, he would be no Papist. The Papist believes the Mystery of the Trinity, the Incarnation and Passion of Christ, the Protestant believes the same Mysteries, yet the one is a Papist and no Protestant, the other is a Protestant and no Papist. And why ? because the Papist believes them upon the Testimony of the Pope and Church, the Protestant believes them upon the Testimony of Gods written Word. Believe then whatever you please of Popery, provided you believe it, because you judge by Scripture it's true, and not because the Pope or the Church says it ; you'll never be a Papist, but a perfect Reformed.

Ismael. If this discourse be solid, you may hedge
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in all the Articles of Popery into our Reformation.

Isaac. If you peruse the works of our Reformed Doctors, you'll hardly find any Article of Popery, but has been judged by many, or some of our best Reformed Doctors, to be the true Doctrine of Scripture; and whereas any Doctrine which any Person of sound Judgment understands by Scripture to be the true, may be justly called the Doctrine of the Reformation; it follows that hardly is there any Article of Popery, for which we see so many persecutions against Subjects, and such troubles in our Parliaments, but is truly the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Ismael. Shew me some Examples of this.

Isaac. The Veneration of Relicks and Saints dead Bones, is generally believed by us to be meer Popery and Superstition, therefore we made no store of *Luther* and *Calvins* Bones, tho we know them to be as great Saints as any in the Popish Church: but Veneration of Relicks and Saints Bones, is the Doctrine of our Reformation; for whatever is set down and commended by our Common Prayer Book, must be undoubtedly esteemed our Reformed Doctrine and Practice, and our Common Prayer Book, printed since our Kings happy Restauration, in its Kalendar sets down a day to the Translation of *S. Edward* King of *Saxons* Body in the month of *June*, and dedicates another to the Translation of the Bodies of *S. Martin* and *Swithin*, in the month of *July*.

The Veneration and use of the sign of the Cross, is flat Popery in the Judgment of all our Congregations; yet any Reformed Child may laudably and piously use it; whereas our Common Prayer Book in the *Administration of Baptism*, commands the Minister to use it, saying, *We sign him with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed, to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner against Sin, the World and the Devil.* And
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in our Kalender, printed since his Majesties Restauration, it's called the Holy Cross.

Our Congregations generally believe, it's Popery to keep Holy-days (except the Sabbath day) and Saints days; to fast Lent, *Vigils*, commanded, Ember-days, and Fridays; and all this is recommended to us in our Common Prayer Book, and the Minister is commanded, in the *Administration of the Lords Supper*, to publish the Holy-days of the week, and exhort us to Fast; and surely, he is not commanded to teach, or exhort us to any thing, but to the Doctrine of the Reformation: it's true, the Students of our Colleges of *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, are much troubled with scruples in this point: these *Pauperes de Lugduno*, are compelled to fast all Fridays throughout the year; and it's not hunger that makes them complain, but tenderness of Conscience, because they fear it's Popery.

It's a Popish error, we say, to believe that *Penance*, or our penal works of Fasting, Almsdeeds, or corporal ansterities, can avail and help for the remission of our sins, and satisfying Gods Justice: No, we say, penal works serve for nothing, all is done by *Repentance*; that's to say, by sorrow of heart for having offended God. This is the Doctrine of *Danaus*, *Willet*, *Junius* and *Calvin*, who says *Francis*, *Dominick*, *Bernard*, *Antony*, and the rest of Popish Monks and Fryars, are in Hell for their austerities and penal works. for all that, you may very well believe, and it's the Doctrine of the Reformation, that *Penance* and penal works, do avail for the remission of our sin, and are very profitable to the soul; for, our Common Prayer Book in the *Communion against sinners*, says thus, *In the Primitive Church, there was a Godly Discipline, that at the beginning of Lent, such as were notorious sinners, were put to open penance, and punish'd in this World, that their Souls may be saved in the day of the Lord.* And our Common Prayer Book wishes,

wishes that this Discipline were restored again; and surely it does not wish that Popery were restored; therefore it's no Popery to say, that Pennance, or Penal works, do satisfy for our sins in this World, and avail to save us in the other.

Ismael. I know many of our Congregation mislike much our Common Prayer Book, for these Popish Tenets; but what do you say of the grand errors of Popery, can a man be a true Child of the Reformation, and yet believe the *Popes Supremacy*; deny the *Kings Supremacy*; believe *Transubstantiation* and *Communion in one kind*; are these Tenets the Doctrine of the Reformation, or consistent with its principles.?

Isaac. The Kings Supremacy is undoubtedly the Doctrine of the Reformation, because it's judged by the Church of *England* to be of Scripture, yet not only the *Quakers*, *Presbyterians*, *Anabaptists*, and other Congregations, judge it's not of Scripture, but as erroneous a Tenet as that of the *Popes* supremacy; *Calvin* 6. *Amos*, says, *They were unadvised people and Blasphemers, who raised King Henry the VIII. so far as to call him the head of the Church*; but also that no Civil Magistrate can be the head of any particular Church, is the Doctrine of the *Centurion*s, *cent. sept. pag. 11. of Cartwright*, *Viretus*, *Kenmitius*, and many others; who doubts then but that in the principles and Doctrine of the Reformation, you may deny the Kings Supremacy, tho' the Church of *England* believes it. The *Popes* Supremacy is the Doctrine of Popery, who doubts it? but it's also the Doctrine of the Reformation, for many of our Eminent Doctors have judged it to be the Doctrine of Scripture, as *Whitgift* (a) who cites *Calvin*, and *Musculus* for this opinion; but it's needful we relate some of their express words, *I do not deny*, says *Luther*, (b) *but that the Bishop of Rome,*

a In *Defens. &c. pag. 373. 70. & 395.* b In *Respons. tredecim. Propos.*

is, has been, and ought to be the first of all ; I believe, he is above all other Bishops, it's not lawful to deny his Supremacy : Melancton *c* says no less that the B. of Rome is above all the Church, that it is his office to govern, to Judge in controversies, to watch over the Priests, to keep all Nations in conformity and unity of Doctrine : Somaiusius, *d* The Pope of Rome has been without controversy the first Metropolitan in Italy, and not only in Italy, nor only in the West, but in all the World, the other Metropolitans have been chief in their respective districts, but the Pope of Rome has been Metropolitan and primate, not only of some particular Diocese, but of all. Grotius *e* has expressly the same Doctrine, and proves this supremacy belongs to the Pope *de Jure Divino*. I pray consider if these Doctors be not men of sound judgment, and of eminent learning and credit in our Reformation, and if our Doctrine be Scripture as such men understand it, consider, I say, with what Justice can this Doctrine be called Popery more than Reformed Doctrine.

As for Transubstantiation, it contains two difficulties ; first, if the Body of Christ be really in the Sacrament ; and this real presence, the *Lutherans* defend to be the Doctrine of Scripture, as well as the *Papists* ; why then should it be called Popish, more than Reformed Doctrine ? The second is, if the substance of Bread be in the Sacrament together with Christs Body : *Lutherans* say it is, *Papists* say it is not, but that there is a Transubstantiation, or change of the whole substance of Bread, into the Body of Christ ; but hear what *Luther f* says of this that we call Popish Doctrine ? I give all persons liberty to believe in this point, what they please, without hazard of their Salvation, either
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c In Epist. ad Card. Belay Episc. Pariens. *d* In Tract. Euchar. ad p. Sermondum. *e* In Annot. super Novum Testam. cap. 10. Matth. & saepe alibi. *f* To. 1. Edit. Jonah. l. de capt. Babil.

that the Bread is in the Sacrament of the Altar, or that it is not; would Luther have given this liberty if Transubstantiation had not been the Doctrine of the Reformation as well as any other? Calvin g also and Beza h affirm, that Luthers Doctrine of the coexistence of Christs Body and the Bread, is more absurd than the Popish Doctrine of the existence of the Body alone; if therefore we be true Reformed, and safely believe the Doctrine of Luther, which is the most absurd; much more will we be of the Reformation, by believing that of the Papists which is less.

Communion in one kind, is the Doctrine of the Reformation, no less than Communion in both; for besides that Luther says, i *They Sin not against Christ who use one kind only, seeing Christ has not commanded to use both*; and again, k *tho' it were an excellent thing to use both kinds in the Sacrament; and Christ has commanded nothing in this as necessary, yet it were better to follow peace and unity, than to contest about the kinds*; but also Melancthon; l who in the opinion of Luther surpasses all the Fathers of the Church, expressly teaches the same Doctrine: and the Church of England Statute 1. Edward VI. commands, *That the Sacrament be commonly administer'd in both kinds, if necessity does not require otherwise*; mark, he says, but commonly, and that for some necessity it may be received in one; lastly, the sufficiency of one kind in the Sacrament, is plainly set down by our Reformed Church of France, in her Ecclesiastical Discipline, printed at Saumur, chap. 12. art. 7. *The Minister must give the Bread in the Supper to them, who cannot drink the Cup, provided it be not for contempt.* And the reason is because

g *Admonit. 2. ad Westph. defens. 2. Oxbod. fit.* h *Lib. de cena Domini.* i *Lib. de capt. Babyl. c. de Euchar.* k *Epist. ad Bahemos in declarat. Euch. & in serm. de Euch.* l *In Concil. Theol. ad March. Elect. de usu utriusque specie; pag. 141.*

cause there are many who cannot endure the taste of Wine; wherefore it often happens among them, that some persons, do take the Bread alone; and truly if some of our Ministers in *England*, do not give better Wine than they are accustomed, who very irreverently serve that Holy Table with naughty trash, it's much to be feared, that our flock will also petition to be dispens'd with in the Cup; because there are some of so delicate Palats, that they cannot endure the taste of bad Wine. Now, you may admire the injustice of the Papists in Condemning our Reformed Doctrine and Doctors as Hereticks, whereas those Tenets are believed by many of us, as well as by them; and the groundless severity of our Congregations in exclaiming against that Doctrine; it being the Doctrine of the Reformation, whereas so many eminent men of our own, judge it to be of Scripture.

Ismael. Whereas I see people persecuted by the Church of *England* for these Tenets, I can hardly be perswaded they are the Doctrine of the Reformation: at our next meeting we will pursue this discourse, the Bell rings for Morning Prayers, A Dieu.

Seventh Dialogue.

I S A A C. You come from Church, as I guess by the Common Prayer Book I see in your hand, I pray let me see the Kalender of it, if it be a *la mode nouvelle*, which was made by the Church of *England*, since his Majesties Restauration.

Ismael. Why? have you met any thing in it, which shocks you?

Isaac. Shock me? No Doctrine or practice of any Congregation, or man of sound Judgment of our
H. Church

Church can shock me ; you know, I plead for liberty to believe and practice as each one judges by Scripture to be true and good. But I observe in your Kalender, you have a day consecrated to *S. Anne* in the month of July ; I would gladly know , what *Ann* is this, which the Church of *England* honours so much ?

Ismael. It's *Ann* , the Mother of the Virgin *Mary*.

Isaac. Is't possible ? I thought it was *Ann Bolen* the Mother of our Virgin *Elizabeth* : I am sure the Church of *England*, is more obliged to Her , than to the other : but as you have put here the Mother of the Virgin *Mary* , why did not you put in also *Elizabeth* mother of the great Baptist ; and the Angel *Gabriel* , as well as *Michael* ?

Ismael. I know not indeed.

Isaac. Nor do I know , if it be not, because that *Elizabeth* and *Gabriel* made the Popish *Ave Maria*, as Scripture relates ; but can you tell , as the Church of *England* put in your Kalender, *S. George* , *S. Andrew* and *S. David* , Patrons of *England* , *Scotland* and *Wales* ; why did not she put in *S. Patrick* Patron of *Ireland* ?

Ismael. I can't tell, what may be the reason, think you ?

Isaac. I know not , if it be not that he forfeited his place for his Purgatory ; for tho the others were as deep in Popery as he , (if we believe the Papists ,) but the Parliament pass'd an Act of Indemnity for *England*, *Scotland* and *Wales*, after the Kings return to his Kingdoms ; and thereby the sin of Popery was forgiven to their Patrons, and no Act of Indemnity was pass'd for *Ireland* , whereby *Patrick* is still guilty ; if it be not , that the *Seven Champions of Christendome* tell us *S. Patrick* was *S. George* his Footman , and it was not thought good manners , to put him in the same rank with his Master.

Ismael. For shame , if not for piety, forbear , I can-

cannot endure to sully Sacred things with profane Ralleries ; the Kalender is a holy institution of the Church, and ought to be reverenc'd.

Isaac. And so is *Episcopacy*, *Surplices*, *Bells*, *Organs*, and *Corner Caps* ; yet I hope you will give *Presbyterians*, *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, &c. leave to laugh at them : and be still as good Children of the Reformation as you, if you esteem them to be Sacred and Holy, reverence and honour them, I commend you for it, if others judge otherwise let them follow their humour ; *each one as he fancies*, *says the Fellow kissing his Cow* ; this is the Holy Liberty of the Reformation, Scripture as each one understands it.

Ismael. Let us return to our last discourse ; how is it possible, that those Tenets of Popery, should be the Doctrine of the Reformation, whereas we see the Church of England so severely persecute the Professors of them ?

Isaac. Do you think a Doctrine is not of the Reformation, because it's denyed by the Church of England ? or because she persecutes the Professors of it ? do not they persecute all *non Conformists*, as well as *Popery* ? persecution is no proof of a Doctrine to be bad ; it's but the effect of a blind zeal armed with power : for to know certainly if a Doctrine be of the Reformation, you must try it by our test of Rule of Faith, which is the written Word of God, and whatever any man of sound Judgment, of a sincere and humble heart judges to be contained in Scripture, or an indubitable consequence out of it ; that man, may believe that Doctrine, let all others Judge of it as they list, and by so believing will be a true Child of the Reformation ; wherefore since that the Church of France, that of England in Edward the VI. time, *Luther*, *Melancthon*, *Grotius*, and the other Authors I quoted, do Judge Transubstantiation, Popes Supremacy, and Communion in one kind to be the Doctrine of Scripture :

we must call it the Doctrine of the Reformation ; and if you judge as they did, you may believe the Doctrine and be still of the Reformation, as well as they.

Ismael. Can you shew me any other Tenet of Popery , which you can call the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Isaac. Alas ! you can hardly shew me any Tenet of Popery , but what is it's Doctrine ; what Doctrine more *Popish* than that of Confession and Absolution from sins ? yet it's as truly the Doctrine of the Reformation , as Figurative Presence : for not only (a) *Lobechius* , b *Altamerus* , c *Sacerius* and d *Melancthon* says , it's a Sacrament : but the Church of England in our Common Prayer Book, declares that Priests have not only the power of declaring their sins to be forgiven to the Penitents, but also the power of forgiving them : and sets down the form of Absolution , which the Minister is to use, *Our Lord Jesus Christ, who left power to the Church to absolve all sinners which truly repent , of his mercy forgive thee and thine offences ; and I by his Authority committed unto me , do Absolve thee from all thy sins :* The Minister of the Diocese of Lincoln in their Survey of the Book of Common Prayers , checkt this Doctrine as Popery, and petitioned to have it blotted out ; but could not prevail ; whereby we are given to understand, it's the Doctrine of the Reformation.

It's Popery , we say , to call Extreame Unction, Confirmation , and Holy Order of Priest-hood, Sacraments : and who can justly deny all this to be the Doctrine of the Reformation ? for *Calvine* says , *I confess , the Disciples of Christ did use Extreame Unction as a Sacrament ; I am not ,* says he , *of the opinion of these,*

a In *Disput. Theol.* pag. 301. b In *Conciliat. loc. Scrip. loco.* 191 c. In *locis Commun. To 1. de Potest. Eccl.* d In *Apol. Confes. Aug. art. 13. & lib. pag. 234.* e In p 5. *Epist. Iac. v. 4.*

those, who judge it *was* only a Medicine for corporal diseases: Calvin t also, and with him our Common Prayer Book and all our Divines say, a Sacrament is nothing else, but a Visible sign of the Invisible Grace we receive by it; and they say with g *Pouel*, h *Hooker* and others, that this definition fits exactly Confirmation, wherefore the Ministers of the Diocess of *Lincolne*, checkt the Common Prayer Book, for giving the Definition of a Sacrament to Confirmation. i *Melancthon*. k *Bilson*, l *Hooker* and m *Calvin* expressly teach, that the Order of Priesthood, is a Sacrament. And when men of so eminent Judgment of our Reformation teach this to be the Doctrine of Scripture, who doubts but that it is of the Reformation.

Ismael. By this, you destroy the Doctrine of the Reformation, of two Sacraments only.

Isaac. Destroy it? God forbid: Because the Church of England says, there are but two Sacraments, I say it's the Doctrine of the Reformation, there are but two, and because so many eminent Men judge by Scripture there are more, I say it's the Doctrine of the Reformation there are more, that's to say six, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extream Unction and Holy Order: and very likely our Bishops and Ministers, for their Wives sake, will not stick to grant that Matrimony also is a Sacrament.

Ismael. But can you say, that Prayers to Saints and Images, Prayers for the dead, and Purgatory, are not meer Popery, and in no wise the Doctrine of the Reformation?

Isaac. Without doubt, those Tenets are Popery; but all the World knows, the *Lutherans* use Images in

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f *Lib. 4. Inst. c. 14. sect. 5.* g *In modest. Examin.* h *In Eccl. Polit. l. 5. sect. 66.* i *In locis Commun. tit. de Numero. Sacram.* k *In perpet. Regim. pag. 109.* l *Iz Eccl. Polit. lib. 5. sect. 77.* m *Lib. 4. Inst. c. 29.*

their Churches and pray before them; and the Holy Synod of *Charenton* has declared, as he was said in our first Dialogue, that the *Lutherans* have nothing of Superstition or Idolatry in their manner of Divine Worship; this is also the Doctrine of *Jacobus*, *Andreas*, o *Brachmanus*, p *Kemnitius*, *Luther* and *Bremius* quoted by *Beza*, q and why should not a Doctrine judged by such eminent Men to be of Scripture, be called the Doctrine of the Reformation? Prayers for the dead and Purgatory, is Popery confessedly; but alas! it is taught expressly by *Urbanus*, *Regius* r *Pucce*, s *Zuinglius*, t *Melancthon*, u *Luther*, x the Common Prayer Book in *King Edwards* time printed 1549. And many others of our learned Doctors, and what can you call more properly the Doctrine of the Reformation, than what such Men teach to be the Doctrine of Scripture: And tho our Brethren, *Quakers*, *Anabaptists*, *Presbyterians* and *Protestants*, Judge Prayers to Angels and Saints to be nothing else but Popery: yet our Common Prayer Book has the same Collect or Prayer to Angels in *S. Michael's* day, that the Popish Mass Book has, and desires that the Angels may succour and defend us on earth; and Prayers to, and intercession of Saints is taught by *Luther*, y *Bil-neus* and *Latimer* quoted by *Fox*, z and consequently it's the Doctrine of the Reformation.

Ismael. If all these *Popish* Articles may be safely believed by the Reformation, and be the Doctrine of our Reformed Church, as well as of Popery; what difference then betwixt us and Popery; or why are we called a Reformation of Popery, or why did we separate from them?

Isaac.

n *Epit. Colloq. Montisbel.* o *In Centur. Exercit. Theol.* pag. 270. p *Exampar* 4. q *In respons ad acta Colloq. Montisbel.* gat. par. 2. in *Præfas.* r *In lo is Commun.* c. 18. & 19. s *Inscrip. Angl.* pag. 450. t *To. 1. in Eupian.* Art. 90. & Art. 60. u *In Apolog. Confes. Aug.* x *To 1. Wittem.* in resol. de Indul. concl. 15. y *Epist ad Spalat.* z *Acts and Mon.* pag. 462. & 312.

Isaac. I have told you already, that our difference from Popery, is not, because we must deny what they believe, for we believe as well as they the Unity and Trinity of God, the Incarnation of his Son, &c. but in this, that the Papists believe because the Pope and Church says, this is true revealed Doctrine, but we believe not because any Church, Pope, or Doctor says so, but because we our selves judge by Scripture it is so ; for if a Papist did say, *I do not believe this is a revealed Truth, because the Pope and Church says it is, but because I find by Scripture it is ;* he would be no Papist ; believe then whatever Doctrine you will, either Popery, Judaism, Protestantcy, Arianism, or what else you please, provided you judge by Scripture it is true, and that you believe it, not because this or that Church, Congregation, or Doctors believe it, but because your self judges it be true, you'll be a true Child of the Reformation: And this is the reason why we are called a Reformation, and why we separated from them, because they would have us take for our Rule of Faith Scripture as interpreted by them, and believe not what we judge to be the Doctrine of Scripture, but what they judge ; and this is also the Reason why *Presbyterians* are jealous with the Church of England ; why *Anabaptists* forsake *Presbyterians*, why these are forsaken by *Quakers*, because each one would have the World judge as they do, and persecute and trouble one another, which is quite against the Spirit of the Reformation, for whereas our Rule of Faith is no Church, Congregation, or man, but Scripture as each one understands it ; it follows that by our principles, every one must be permitted to believe whatever he pleases, and by so doing, he will be a true Child of the Reformation.

Ismael. The Church of England nor any of our Congregations, will never believe any of those Popish Tenets.

[*Isaac.*

Isaac. The time may come that they may believe them all, and be still as good Reformers as now they are? For if the Pope and his Church should to morrow deny and excommunicate those Tenets, which now they so stedfastly believe, (and I hope they will some day,) then it would be a pious and virtuous action in all Reformed Children, to believe them all, as much as now they deny them: And let us pretend what other reasons we please, but it's very certain that the strongest reason we can have to deny those Articles, is because the Pope and his Church believes them, and consequently, if the Popish Church would but deny them, we might and ought to believe them, you will think this a Paradox; but listen to our Apostolical and Divine *Luther*: (a) *If a general Council, says he, did permit Priests to marry, it would be a singular mark of Piety, and sign of Godliness, in that case to take Concubines, rather than to marry in conformity to the Decree of the Council, I would in that case command Priests not to marry under pain of damnation. And again he says; b If the Council should Decree Communion in both kinds; in contempt of the Council, I would take one only kind or none. See these words of Luther, quoted by our learned Hospinian, c and Jewel, d and see it's not only my Doctrine but of great Luther, that in case the Pope and Council deny all the Tenets they now believe; we may, and it will be a pious, godly action to believe them, and make as many Acts of Parliament for them, as now we have against them. But what's the matter? Methinks you become pale, something troubles you, speak, what is't?*

Ismael. It's the horror I conceive against your discourse, my countenance cannot be in a calm, when my mind is in such a storm and confusion: pursue no more,

a *To. 2. Germ. fol. 214.* b *De formula Missæ & To 3. Germ.* c *In Histor. Sacram. par. 2. fol. 13.* d *In replicat. at. Hardingam.*

more, you said enough that I should curse the day I have ever seen you, or heard that which you call *Holy Liberty*, which is but a prostitution of Consciences, a profanation of all that is sacred, and an open gap to all impiety in Doctrine and Manners: But I hope the Lord has given me that profound respect and attach to our Holy Reformation, that I shall not be beaten from it by all your engines, able to inspire a contempt and hatred of it to any weak Brother, for who would live a moment in it, if such impious Tenets, such scandalous and blasphemous Doctrines were of it, or were unavoidable sequels out of its principles: No, no, the principles of the Reformed Church are sound and Orthodox, and no Doctrine can follow from them, but what's pure and true.

Isaac. Let me tell you, I have as tender a love for the Reformation as you: And I will maintain the *Holy Liberty* I assert, cannot justly be called a prostitution of Consciences; for, you dare not deny but this is an Orthodox and sound principle, that our Rule of Faith is Scripture as each person of sound Judgment understands it; that it is lawful for each person of sound Judgment to read it, to give his Judgment of the true sense of it, and to believe and hold that sense of it, which he thinks in his Conscience to be true; is there any prostitution of Consciences in this Doctrine? Or is it not the Doctrine of our Reformation?

Ismael. All this is true, the prostitution of Consciences lyes not there, but in the scandalous and blasphemous Tenets, which you pretend that follow out of that Rule of Faith.

Isaac. But you wrong the Reformation in calling such Tenets blasphemies and scandals: For since our Rule of Faith is Scripture as each person of sound Judgment understands it; if this Rule of Faith be good and sound, if it be Religious and Holy, any Doctrine that is conformable to this Rule, must be good, sound,
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religious and holy ; this being our Rule of Faith and Manners, it's clearer than day light, that all and each Tenet which I rehearsed in all my former discourses, are conformable to our Rule of Faith ; for our Rule is *Scripture as each Man of sound Judgment understands it.* Our Doctrine therefore must be, *what any Person of sound Judgment understands to be the Doctrine of Scripture.* This is an evident sequel out of that Principle, and whereas there is not one Tenet of all those which I rehearsed, whether they concern Doctrine or Manners ; but was Judged by the Doctors, which I cited for it, to be the Doctrine of Scripture ; it follows unavoidably, that there is not one Tenet of them but is the Doctrine of the Reformation : Therefore you must be forced to either of these two ; either to say that our Rule of Faith, by which such Doctrines are warranted, is naught, wicked and scandalous, and leads to a prostitution of Consciences and Manners ; or that all those Tenets, are good, sound, pious, and no prostitution or corruption of our Consciences : For, pick and choose out the Doctrine which you think to be the most wicked and scandalous of all those I rehearsed ; you cannot deny, but that it was taught by the Author I quoted for it and Judged by him, to be the Doctrine of Scripture. And if no Doctor hitherto had believed it, you or I, or some other Person of sound Judgment, may Judge it to be the Doctrine of Scripture ; Either of both, then you must be constrained to grant. Or that the Doctrine of the Reformation, is not what each Person of sound Judgment understands to be the Doctrine and sense of Scripture, which is as much as to say, that our Rule of Faith must not be Scripture as we understand it, but that we must believe against our own Judgment and Conscience, what others say is the Doctrine and sense of Scripture : Or you must grant that all and each of those Tenets I rehearsed, is the Doctrine of the Reformation, tho you, or this,
or

or that Man may Judge them to be blasphemies and scandals.

Ismael. I confess our Rule of Faith in the Reformation is Scripture as each Person understands it ; for all our reformed Churches, with the Church of *England*, in her 39 Articles do give us this Rule of Faith. I confess consequently out of this Principle, that we must not believe what Doctrine or sense of Scripture others Judge to be true and Orthodox, if we do not our selves Judge it to be such, for we must not be forced to believe against our Judgments : Lastly I confess we may safely believe, whatsoever Doctrine we seriously Judge to be the Doctrine of Scripture, but provided, that such a Tenet or Doctrine be not plainly against Scripture, and be not plain and downright impiety and blasphemy.

Isaac. And in case you, or the Church of *England*, *Rome*, *France*, or *Germany*, Judges a Doctrine to be blasphemous and against Scripture, and *Luther*, or *Calvin*, or I, or another, Judges it is good Doctrine and conformable to Scripture, to which Judgment must I stand ? Must I believe yours against my Conscience and Knowledge ? Or must not I believe my own ? Is it not the Principle and practice of our Reformation, that I must believe what I judge in my conscience to be Scripture, and not what others judge, if they judge the contrary ? When *Luther* began the Reformation, did not almost all Christians and the whole Church believe Purgatory and Prayers to Saints to be the Doctrine of Scripture ? And did not he very commendably deny it against them all, because he Judged by Scripture it was not ? Will a *Presbyterian* believe Episcopacy, because the Church of *England* says it's the Doctrine of Scripture ? No, but deny it because himself Judges it is not.

Ismael. It's true, each one may lawfully believe what himself Judges to be the Doctrine of Scripture,
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provided he be a Godly well intentioned Man, humble and meek in spirit; provided secondly, that what he understands to be the sense and Doctrine of Scripture, be not absurd and impious in the Judgement of all the rest of the Faithful: For let a man be ever so learned and Godly; if he gives an Interpretation of Scripture which is denied by all the Church, he must not be followed.

Isaac. Your first Proviso is very good, and I hope you will meet no Doctor of all those I quoted for those Tenets, which you call Blasphemies, who was not a learned, godly, humble, and well intentioned Man, who will be so bold as to deny it of *Luther, Calvin, Beza, Zuinglius, &c.*? Your second Proviso is not just, and in it you overthrow the whole Reformation, and our Rule of Faith; for this being as you granted, Scripture as each person of sound Judgments understands it; whatever Interpretation or sense any man of sound Judgement understands to be of Scripture, he may safely and piously believe it, tho' all the rest of the World should judge it to be impious and blasphemous, otherwise our Rule of Faith, must not be Scripture as we understand it, but as it is understood by others: And whereas no Tenet of all those I rehearsed, but was judged to be the sense and Doctrine of Scripture, by some of those eminent Doctors I quoted, it follows they might have safely believed them; and if you or I Judge as they did, we may also believe as they did, and be still of the Reformation.

Ismael. It's wicked and pernicious to say any particular person may believe his own private sense and interpretation of Scripture, if it be Judged by all others to be naught; and therefore the Church of England prudently and wisely, puts a stop and bridle to the extravagant and rambling imaginations of particular persons; they must conform themselves, and believe but what the Church Judges may be safely believed.

Isaac,

Isaac. Pray Sir, since when is it commendable to constrain Mens Judgements to believe, not what each one thinks best, but what the Church thinks may be safely believed? Was this commendable in the beginning of our Reformation, when our blessed Reformers began to teach their private Judgments against the Church then established? If it was then the Church of *Rome* is to be commended, for persecuting and excommunicating our first Reformers; and if this was not, nor is it not commendable in the Church of *Rome* why is it commendable in the Church of *England*? This is a piece of *Papery*, whereof the Church of *England* is Guilty, and for which all our Congregations are jealous of her: Be it known to you, our other Congregations, *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*, *Anabaptists*, &c. are as truly and Godly Children of the Reformation as the Church of *England*; and they will not submit to that Popish Tyranny, nor suffer any curb to their Judgments, but will have our Rule of Faith to be but Scripture, and each one to understand, and believe it, as he thinks best in the Lord.

Ismael. I confess, other Congregations will admit no such curb, nor bridle to their Judgments, but follow Scripture as they understand it; but the Church of *England* has a reverent regard for the sense and Interpretation of it given by Primitive ages, Fathers and Councils, and that we prefer before the private Interpretations of particular Persons.

Isaac. And just so saith the Popish Church to *Luther* and our first blessed Reformers, and if that had been well done; we should have had, neither Protestancy nor any other Reformation: But you confess at least, that the Rule of Faith in all other Congregations, is but Scripture as each Person understands it, and each Person may consequently believe his own sense of it, and deny the sense of any other if he does not like it: Then you must confess, that in all other

Congregations, except the Church of *England*, any Reformed Child may believe any sense and Doctrine, which any Person of sound Judgment Judges to be Scripture, if himself likes it, tho all the rest of the World may think it naught; and whereas you cannot deny, but that all and each Doctor quoted by me for those Tenets, which you call Blasphemies, were sound and able Judgments; you must confess, that it is a necessary sequel out of their Rule of Faith, that in all other Congregations they may piously and safely believe all those Tenets, and be still true Children of the Reformation.

Ismael. I confess if they speak coherently and stand to their Principles, they may believe them safely; but as I hate those Blasphemous Tenets, I abhor and detest also that Principle and Rule of Faith of other Congregations, from which such Tenets are unavoidable sequels.

Isaac. Good *Ismael*, you forget what you have hitherto all along avowed, and you are quite astray from the Doctrine of the Reformation: You have often granted me, that our Rule of Faith is Scripture, not as this or that Congregation, Doctor, or Church, but as each Person of sound Judgment understands it; and now you tell me you hate and detest that Rule, because that out of it, there follow strange and blasphemous Tenets? You say, the sense and Interpretation of the primitive ages, Church and Fathers must be preferred before the Interpretation of any private Person or Congregation; and what think you of our whole Reformation, and particularly of our 39. Articles of the Church of *England*, which allow no other Rule of Faith, but Scripture as each Person of sound Judgment understands it? What say you of *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, and the rest of our first Reformers, who preferred their own private sense and Interpretation of Scripture,

ture, before that of the whole Church? What say you to the *Presbyterians*, who prefer their own sense and Interpretation of the Bible, before that of the Church of *England*? What say you of all the Congregations of the Reformed Church, each one of which, holds it's sense and Doctrine of Scripture, different from all the rest? I grant, there ought to be a respect for the Judgment and Interpretation of the Text, given by the Primitive Church and Fathers; but if a Doctor, or Man of sound Judgment, replenisht with Gods Spirit, reads Scripture with an humble Heart, and pure Intention, and Judges by it, that Bygamy is law-ful; that there is no Mystery of three Persons in one Divine Nature; that Christ despaired on the Cross, &c. Tho these Doctrines be quite against the Judgment of Fathers, Church, and Councils, he may believe them, and be still a true Reformed Child, because he follows our Rule of Faith; and if he must deny these Articles, because others decry them; then he must go against his own Judgment and Conscience, for to conform himself to them, and his Rule of Faith must not be Scripture as each Man of sound Judgment understands it; but as the primitive Ages, Church, and Councils understands it; and this is Popery.

Imiel. Prethee Friend *Isaac*, let's give over: All that your discourse drives at, by what I can perceive, is either to beat me from the Reformation; by shewing me the absurdity of its Rule of Faith; or oblige me to believe scandalous and blasphemous Tenets, a necessary sequels out of that Rule: I am a Child of the Reformation, and never will be otherwise.

Isaac. The Lord, who is the Searcher of Hearts knows, you misconster my intentions: How can you say I intend to beat you from the Reformation

tion; do not I insist and perswade you to stick fast to its Rule of Faith, and acknowledge no other but Scripture, as you understand it? How can you say, I oblige you to believe false and scandalous Tenets? To the contrary, I advise you not to believe them, if you judge by Scripture they are false and scandalous: What my discourse drives at it, that you should not censure, blame, or call any Doctrine blasphemous, scandalous, false, or Heretical, (Popery excepted,) for, tho you Judge by Scripture it is not true; another will Judge it to be the true sense and Doctrine of the Text; and if he does, he may with a safe Conscience believe it, and ought not to be blamed by you or any other for believing it; if you do not like that Doctrine, do not believe it; but let the other believe as he Judges by Scripture he may, and let every tub stand on its own bottom.

Ismael. Once more I beseech you give over; I will not discourse any more with you.

Isaac. Nay Dear *Ismael*, I see you are troubled, and I will not leave you in that perplexity: Be pleased to listen to three points I will propose unto you, and you'll not miss to find satisfaction in either of them.

Ismael. Let's hear them.

Isaac. Will you believe Scripture, as it is Interpreted, and in that sense which the Church, Councils, and Fathers propound unto you?

Ismael. I will not be obliged to that, for I may Judge by Scripture that sense and Interpretation of it, to be false and erroneous, and I will not be obliged to believe any thing against my Judgment and Conscience; that is Popery.

Isaac. That's well, in so much you follow the footsteps of *Luther*, *Calvin*, and our first Reformers,

mers, who would not believe what the Church believed in their time, nor regarded not what the Papists alledged out of the Councils and Fathers against them, because they held themselves obliged to believe Scripture as they understood it, and not as it was understood by others: Will you then believe Scripture in that sense and interpretation which your self judges to be true, tho' the Church, Councils, and all other Congregations judge it to be false and erroneous, and give the like liberty to all others?

Ismael. That's dangerous; for it would follow that any man might believe without check or blame, the greatest blasphemies imaginable, if he Judges them to be the sense of the Text.

Isaac. Why then, since that the first does not please you, for fear of constraining your Judgment Papist-like; and the second displeases you, for the scope it gives for to believe any thing, or nothing; your best way will be to lay Scripture aside, whereas Christ has forgot, or neglected to appoint us some assured means for to know what sense of it he would have us believe.

Ismael. And what Religion shall I profess if I lay Scripture aside?

Isaac. The same which now you have by Scripture; that's to say, whatever you Judge to be the true Worship of God: Be sure to profess a reverence for Scripture, and seem to believe it's the Word of God, least you may scandalize weak Brethren; pretend always that your sentiments are grounded upon the Text, but betwixt you and God, believe whatever you think to be true, worship God as you Judge he is to be worship'd, and that's the way to live in peace: Do you think but that those Noble Spirits which they call the Wits of England, have a good Religion? In publick they speak reverently of the Bible, but we know what they

have, and do declare in their private discourses, that is but a *Romance*, or meer fiction: Do you think but that there was a Religion in *England* before it saw *Gregory's Emissaries*, *Austin* and his Monks? What need therefore of a Bible for to have Religion? Were not the *Swinfeldians* a religious Congregation, and of the Reformation too, yet they cared not for Scripture, but grounded their belief upon Gods inspiration and inward speech to the heart.?

Ismael. If I were not well acquainted with you, and had not very convincing proofs, and signal testimonies of your piety, solid Religiosity, and Christianity, I would Judge you by this last piece of your discourse, to be an impious *Atheist* or *Pagan*: and I wonder that so good a Christian, as I know you to be, should speak so irreverently of the Bible, and so much in commendation of Paganism as you do: There was indeed a Religion in *England* before they knew what Scripture was; but that Religion was Paganism, which *Austin* and his Companions happily banisht from our Land.

Isaac. Happily? do you call an exchange of Paganism for Popery (introduced by *Austin*) a Happiness? is it not generally believed in our Reformation, and most strongly proved of late, by that incomparable Wit and Pen-man, Doctor *Stillfleet*, that Popery has as much of Idolatry as Paganism: our Land therefore had in Paganism as good a Religion, as it received by *Austin* in Popery: Does not this our noble Champion, and most of the Scribes of the Church of *England* teach, that Popery is a *saving Religion*, that we may be saved in the Church of *Rome*? if Popery (not withstanding it be Idolatry, as they say) be a saving Religion, how can they deny but that Paganism is also a saving Religion? what need had our Forefathers therefore to abandon Paganism? why was it not left in the land?

Ismael:

Ismael. Whatever may be said of Popery, it cannot be denied, but that *Christianity* is better than Paganism: the expulsion therefore of Paganism by *Austin* was a Happiness, because by it *Christianity* was introduced, and established in our Kingdom.

Isaac. Alas *Ismael* ! if *England* had been as well informed of the merit of Paganism, when first *Christianity* was preached, it had never exchanged the one for the other.

Ismael. What, not Paganism, which adored a Multitude of Gods, for *Christianity* which adores but one ? Not Paganism, which adored *Jupiter*, *Saturn*, *Venus*, &c. who were Devils and Evil Spirits ; or wicked Men, who caused themselves to be adored, for *Christianity*, which adores the only true, immortal and eternal Deity ?

Isaac. You speak with the Vulgar sort, and believe as you have been instructed by your Ancestors : I confess, the Apostles, and Ancient Doctors of Christianity do teach that the Gods of the Gentiles were Devils or Evil Spirits ; I confess also, all the Christian World since the first preaching of the Gospel, was so persuaded, grounded upon Scripture, which in several places says, *the Gods of the Gentiles were Devils*, grounded upon the Doctrine of the Apostles, and their Successors the Fathers of the Church, and the World being persuaded by the Apostles, by the Doctors, Fathers, and Preachers of *Christianity*, that the Gods which the Pagans adored were but Devils which by forceries, and marvelous works deceived mankind, and made themselves to be adored as Gods, all men were ashamed to adore but Devils, forsook Paganism and embraced Christianity. And all was but a meer Policy of Popery, to cast so much dirt and calumny upon Paganism, and make it Gods but Devils for to introduce and establish Christianity ; Doctor *Stillingfleet* in his Charge of *Idolatry against the Church of Rome*,

pag. 40. and 41. says plainly, that the Pagans are charged with more than they were guilty of; pag. 7. says that *Jupiter* adored by the Pagans; was so far from being an Arch-devil, in the opinion of S. Paul, that he was the true God, Blessed for ever more: that the Pagans adored but one supream and Omnipotent God, which they called *Jupiter*, and which they did believe to be neither a Devil, nor a Man, but a true, and the first and chiefest of the Gods; and that the rest of the Gods, which they adored, they looked upon them as upon *Inferiour Deities*, and gave them no other adoration, but such as the Papists give to their Saints.

If therefore the Pagans adored the true God under the name of *Jupiter*, and the other Gods but as inferior Deities, as the Papists do their Saints; was it not unjustly done by the Ancient Fathers and Teachers of Christianity, to have imposed upon the World, and made us believe the Pagans adored but Devils and Evil Spirits? Have not the Pagans Right and Justice on their side, for to plead before our Wise and Religious Parliament, that Paganism may be restored, or at least tolerated, and *Jupiter*, with the rest of the Gods, may be adored, as formerly they were; first because Paganism is no more Idolatry than Popery, as Doctor *Stillingfleet*, Master *Burnet*, and other Reformed writers prove convincingly; secondly, because that Paganism having been banish'd out of our Land upon the false Information of our first Teachers, that it was an Adoration of Devils, or Evil Spirits, and wicked debauched men, who by counterfeited Wonders, and Cheats, gained the peoples Adoration; since that Doctor *Stillingfleet*, Mr. *Burnet*, and other Reformed Writers will make it out, that the Pagans adored no Devils, but One, true Omnipotent, supreme God, blessed for evermore, which they called *Jupiter*, and the rest of the Gods as

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inferior Deities, as Papists do their Saints, and will prove that the Pagans were charged by the first D. Doctors of Christianity, and by all our Ancestors, with more than they were guilty of; why should not Paganism be restored again to the Land, and heard to speak for its self, and Dr. *Stillington* and his zealous companions be licenc'd to plead for them, and for holy *Jupiter*, so foully misrepresented by Antiquity, as to be believed an Arch Devil, whom Dr. *Stillington* will prove to have been, a true God blessed for ever more.

Ismael. The more I discourse with you, the more I am perplexed in mind; I bid you adieu, and do confess I carry with me from your discourse a dislike of what I have been hitherto an unsettlement in my perswasion, and a compassion of the poor Pagans, so unjustly banish'd from our Nation, if what Doctor *Stillington* says, be true, he is a learned, Religious, and diligent searcher into Scripture; the Ancient D Drs. and Fathers of the Church reading Scripture, judged and taught, that *Jupiter* was a Devil, as well as the rest of the Gods which the Gentiles adored; Dr. *Stillington* and other Reformed D Drs. reading Scripture Judge he was no Devil, but the true God blessed for evermore; any Child of the Reformation may believe either of both, and put *Jupiter* in our Liranies, as well as JESUS Christ, and offer Sacrifice to him as formerly our Ancestors did; for whatever any man of sound Judgment Judges to be the Doctrine of Scripture, may be safely believed, and is the Doctrine of the Reformation: As for my part I see our Wise Parliament sits now upon a new settlement of Government and Religion, and I will not resolve upon any Religion, until I see what it concludes. If Dr. *Stillington* be so zealous as to put in a good word for Paganism before that Religious Assembly, he may find Abettors, and as the Parliament cherishes Dr.

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Oates for the extirpation of Popery, so it may cherish *Dr. Stillingfleet* for the introduction of *Paganism*, and the erecting of Temples and Altars for *holy Jupiter* his true and evermore blessed God; and if he be successful in this undertaking, as for exchanging *Presbytery* for *Protestancy*, he was promoted to the Deanry of *S. Paul*, so by changing Christianity for *Paganism*, he may expect to be his Holy *Jupiter's High Priest*, in *London Capitol*, and reign with him everlastingly in the other life, in case he believes there is another.

FINIS.

